

S E R M O N S

ON THE

Following SUBJECTS,

V I Z.

Unreasonable Expectations not to be gratified in Religion.	Of the Spiritual Nature of the Gospel.
How the Law is said to be the Strength of Sin.	Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.
How CHRIST has enabled us to conquer Sin.	Of receiving the Holy Ghost.
How CHRIST has given us the Victory over Death.	Of the Power and Authority of CHRIST.
The Inexcusableness of rejecting the Gospel.	Of the different Gifts of the Spirit.
Different Tempers judge differently of Religion.	Of the Desire of Knowledge.
Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.	Of the Testimony of our SAVIOUR'S Doctrines.
Of CHRIST'S Descent into Hell.	Of our SAVIOUR'S Temptation.
Of CHRIST'S Sitting on the Right Hand of GOD.	The Shortness and Vanity of Human Life.
The Conversation of Christians is in Heaven.	Of Resignation to the Divine Will in Affliction.
	The End of GOD'S afflicting Men.
	The Event of Things not always answerable to Second Causes.

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D.

Late Rector of St. James's, Westminster.

V O L. IV.

L O N D O N,

Printed for A. MILLAR; J. and R. TONSON; J. HODGES;
W. BOWYER; R. BALDWIN; and S. CROWDER and
H. WOODGATE. M DCC LVI.

CONTENTS.

SERM. I. Unreasonable Expectations not to be gratified in Religion.

MATTH. xii. 39.

An evil and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Propbet Jonas. Page 1

SERM. II. How the Law is said to be the Strength of Sin.

I COR. xv. 56, 57.
The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 18

SERM. III. How CHRIST has enabled us to conquer Sin.

I COR. xv. 56, 57.
The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 42

SERM. IV. How CHRIST has given us the Victory over Death.

I COR. xv. 56, 57.
The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 53

iv CONTENTS.

SERM. V. The Inexcusableness of rejecting the Gospel.

H E B. ii. 3, 4.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will? 80

SERM. VI. Different Tempers judge differently of Religion.

I C O R. i. 22, 23, 24.

For the Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. 100

SERM. VII. Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.

I C O R. xv. 14.

And if Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith also is vain. 115

SERM. VIII. Of CHRIST'S Descent into Hell.

P S A L M xvi. 9, 10.

Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my Flesh also shall rest in hope. For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy holy One to see Corruption. 67

SERM.

CONTENTS.

SERM. IX. Of CHRIST's sitting on the Right Hand of GOD.

H E B. viii. 1.

Now of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the Right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.

149

SERM. X. The Conversation of Christians is in Heaven.

P H I L. iii. 20.

For our Conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

165

SERM. XI. Of the spiritual Nature of the Gospel.

2 C O R. iii. 17, 18.

Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty: But we all with open face, beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,

183

SERM. XII. Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

M A T T H. xii. 31, 32.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men; But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men: And whosoever speaketh a
Word

Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come. 202

SERM. XIII. Of receiving the Holy Ghost.

ACTS xix. 2, 3.

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? 222

SERM. XIV. Of receiving the Holy Ghost.

ACTS xix. 2, 3.

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? 241

SERM. XV. Of the Power and Authority of
CHRIST.

ST. MATTH. xxviii. part of ver. 18, 19, 20.

All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth: Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even unto the End of the World. 259

SERM.

CONTENTS. vii

SERM. XVI. Of the different Gifts of the Spirit.

1 COR. xii. 4, 5, 6.

Now there are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are Differences of Administrations, but the same Lord; And there are Diversities of Operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all.

279

SERM. XVII. Of the Desire of Knowledge.

DEUT. xxix. 29.

The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children, for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law.

298

SERM. XVIII. Of the Testimony of our SAVIOUR'S Doctrines.

1 JOHN v. 8.

And there are Three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; And these Three agree in One.

317

SERM. XIX. Of our SAVIOUR'S Temptation.

MATTH. iv. 1.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.

333

SERM. XX. Of our SAVIOUR'S Temptation.

MATTH. iv. 1.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.

350

SERM.

SERMON. *gelical* Obedience. To Men, having dispensed

I. various Talents and various Degrees of Knowledge, at sundry times and in divers manners, according to his own good pleasure; after the similitude of the Great King in our Saviour's Parable, who, in the distribution of Employments among his Servants, without injury to any one, did what he pleased with his own: To Men, I say, God having dispensed various Talents and various degrees of Knowledge, he expects of them a Return proportionable to what is given them; Not over-ruling their Actions by the Force and Power of an irresistible Light; but trying their Obedience by the Willingness of their Endeavours to seek after Knowledge, and to guide themselves by That degree of Light (whatsoever it be) whereby his Will is in any measure made known unto them.

IN the State of *Nature*, God made himself known to Men by the Arguments of Reason, by the Works of Creation, and by the dispensations of Providence; *having never left himself wholly without witness, but sending men rain and fruitful Seasons, and filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness; the invisible things of God from the Creation of the World being clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20.* If the Nations of the World, forsaking this Universal Light, fall into the absurdest and most unreasonable Idolatries, and consequently into vitious and corrupt Prac-

tices of all kinds; *they are evidently* (as St. Paul SERM.
declares) *without Excuse*; and there is no injus- I.
tice with God, if to such *evil and adulterous Ge-*
nerations of Men there be *no other Sign* given, but
the *Signs of Nature and Reason and Conscience*, and
the perpetual universal *Works of God*.

UNDER the Gospel, God has made himself
known to Men by the Revelation of his Son,
confirmed by Signs and Wonders and Miracles
of the Holy Ghost, by the Completion of Prophe-
cies, and by the Analogy of the Whole Series of
Events from the Beginning of the World. If un-
der this *greater and clearer Light of Revelation*,
men still continue impenitent; not bringing forth
the suitable Fruits of Righteousness, nor living
worthy of their holy vocation, and as becometh the
Gospel of Christ; the wrath of God is more severely
revealed from Heaven, against all unrighteousness
and ungodliness of Such men; and there shall no
further Sign be given to such an *evil and adulterous*
generation, but the Sign of the Son of man coming
with the clouds of Heaven, in flame of fire taking
Revenge on them that know not God, and that
obey not the Gospel.

UNDER the Jewish state, God manifested him-
self to That People by the Law of Moses, by the
continual Preaching of the Prophets, and finally
by the accomplishment of the whole dispensation
in the Life and Death and Resurrection of Christ.
And when they who saw These manifestations of
God, were not thereby prevailed upon to bring
forth

SER.M. forth Fruits meet for Repentance, and answerable

I. to the *Light* that was then come into the World; but, on the contrary, cavilled at our Lord's Doctrine and Miracles, and continually required *More Signs*; our Lord, with just indignation, gives them the Reply in the Text; *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whale's Belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth.*

In discoursing upon which Words, I have before observed, that the matter of instruction therein contained, may be reduced to the following Heads.

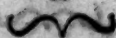
1st, THAT the Doctrine of Religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing* and *universal Signs* or *Marks of Truth*. 'Tis supposed in the words, that, what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That Generation of the *Jews* *inexcusable* in their Unbelief.

2^{dly}, HERE is a description given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their Character; that they are apt continually to require *more* and *more Signs*, and to tempt God without Reason and without End.

not to be gratified in Religion.

5

End. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.* SERM. I.



3dly, THE declaration our Saviour here makes, plainly implies, that there are just and good reasons, why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt Minds. *There shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*

THE First of these I have already gone through; and have shown, that the Doctrine of Religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing and universal Signs or Marks of Truth*. According to our Saviour's Supposition in the words of the Text; that, what he here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

THE Second Observable, was, the Description here given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their Character; that they are apt continually to require *more and more Signs*, and to tempt God without reason and without End: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.* And This Observation I at large illustrated by That *remarkable Instance* the Scripture gives us, of the behaviour of the *people of the Jews* in their passage through the *Wilderness*; which is so distinctly recorded in the Books of *Moses*, and so frequently alluded to in the *Psalms*,

SERMON. and in St Paul's Epistles to the *Corinthians* and to the *Hebrews*, as a standing Admonition and Caution to perverse Minds, in all succeeding generations.

I.

I SHALL Now proceed to some Other Instances of the like Sort, in which the Unreasonableness of tempting God in this manner will still further appear. In our Saviour's time, the same spirit of Perverseness, which the Scripture calls an *evil heart of Unbelief*, (meaning always by Unbelief, not a reasonable Caution in withholding the Assent, but a captious Desire of evading the reasons of conviction,) In our Saviour's time, I say, the same perverse Spirit, which appeared so remarkably in the *Jews of old* in the Wilderness, continued still in the corrupt part of that Nation; so that whatever Method the divine Wisdom thought fit to make use of, in order to bring them to Repentance; they could always render it ineffectual. *John the Baptist* came unto them, neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine, Luke vii. 33. that is, he came in the more severe way of austerity and mortification; and they said, *He hath a Devil*; that is, they charged him with being enthusiastick and mad. On the other hand, the Son of man is come eating and drinking, ver. 34. that is, in the more familiar way of a free conversation; and they said, *Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and Sinners*. The Methods of proceeding were Both of them right in their proper Time and Place; and Wisdom is justified

tified of all her Children; But incorrigible men S E R M.
 could equally find Objections against Both. I.
 Our Saviour therefore, in a most elegant parable, 
 compares them to cross and perverse children,
 whom neither Mirth nor Seriousness could please:
Ver. 31. Whereunto shall I liken the men of This ge-
neration? and to what are they like? They are like
unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling
one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you,
and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you,
and ye have not wept. When the men of Naza-
 reth heard what mighty Works our Lord had
 done at Capernaum, they said, *Whatsoever we have*
heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy own
country, Luke iv. 23. On the other hand, when
 he did Wonders in his own Country, then their
 Answer was, *Depart hence, and go into Judea;*
that thy Disciples also may see the works that thou
doest; — If thou dost these things, show thyself to
the world, John vii. 3. When our Lord had mi-
 raculously healed many diseased Persons here up-
 on Earth, then the Pharisees said unto him,
Master, we would see of thee a Sign from Heaven:
 And when there came unto him a voice from
 Heaven, John xii. 28, the Evangelist tells us,
ver. 37. that yet they believed not on him. When
 the Chief Priests and Elders saw our Saviour
 crucified, they said, *Matth. xxvii. 42. He saved*
others, himself he cannot save; if he be the King of
Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and
we will believe him: But when he was risen from

S E R M. the Dead, to the Terror of their own Soldiers,

I. whom they had set to watch him; then they gave them money to report, that *his Disciples had come by night, and stolen him away*, ch. xxviii.

13. Thus, of tempting God, and of continually requiring more and greater Signs, and of finding Means to elude the Arguments and Motives of Religion, there is no End. The *Temper* from which all this proceeds, is of the *same* kind with that *tempting of Providence*, which the Gospel emphatically represents to us in the history of *our Saviour's Temptation*; where *Satan* placing him upon a *pinnacle of the Temple*, argues with him, that, if he was the *Son of God*, he might safely venture to *cast himself down* from thence: For if God owned and declared him to be his *Son*, and had so peculiar a Favour for him; *why* should not he preserve him from being hurt in his Fall? *Matth.* iv. 6. The Ground upon which incorrigible Sinners reject all the Arguments and Motives of Religion, is generally of *the like* Nature. If it be the *Will* of God, that men should *believe* and *act* in such or such a particular manner; *Why* does not he *compel* them so to do? *Why* does not he perpetually *give them Signs from Heaven*? *Why* does he not *turn their hearts*, which way soever he pleases? for *Who* has *resisted his Will*? The Answer is very plain; that God does not absolutely *will* such and such things to be done, but his Will is that men should *chuse* to do them upon reasonable Motives;

not to be gratified in Religion.

9

tives: In which alone consists the essence of all S E R M.
Virtue, and of all *Religion*. God does not there- I.
fore by irresistible Motives *compel* men to *obey* him; because, if he did, it would for that very Reason be in *them* no Act of Obedience. But he *tries* their Obedience, by the *proper* Instruments of *Persuasion*; and by Motives suited to the nature of *rational* and *free* Agents. Of these, *some* love the knowledge of *Truth*; and are always ready, according to the degree of the Light afforded them, to do what is *Right*: And these our Saviour, in his parable of the Sower, very significantly compares to *Good Ground*. *Others* love *Darkness* rather than *Light*, and Arguments of Reason make no Impression upon them, and their *Hearts* are as *hard as the Nether-millstone*. To *these*, the exquisite *Works of Nature* prove not the *Being of God*; the *Revelation of the Gospel*, discovers not to them his *Will*: And should God vouchsafe them still *other Calls* to Repentance, they would prove equally ineffectual, neither would *they* be *persuaded*, even *though one rose from the Dead*. Of this we have a remarkable Instance, *John* xii. 9, 10. *Much people* — *came, not for Jesus sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the Dead*: But the chief Priests consulted, that they might put *Lazarus also to death*. These were, in the strongest sense of the words in my Text, *an evil and adulterous generation*; altogether unworthy of having any further Signs given them; and whose behaviour

SERMON VI. our abundantly justifies our Lord's declaration
 II in the following part of the Text, (which was
 the

Third and Last thing I proposed to speak to; viz. the declaration our Saviour here makes,) plainly implying that there are just and good reasons; why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt minds: There shall no Sign be given to this generation, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas. Now the reasonableness of this Proceeding, is very evident from what has been already said. Eternal Life, is the Gift of God: And the Design of God, (his *just and reasonable Design,*) is to bestow this *free Gift*, upon those who by an habitual *Practice of Virtue*, shall have their Minds qualified for that happy State. The *Practice of Virtue* consists, in the *willing Choice* of what is good, and *avoiding* what is evil: And the *Time* of this Choice, is the *present State of Probation*. God could, if he had pleased, by giving *no free Will* to his Creatures, have prevented *all possibility of Moral Evil*. But then the whole *Creation of God*, would have been only a great *Machine*; in which the *Omnipotence* indeed of the Maker, would have appeared; but he would have been no *King*, no *Judge*, no *Moral Governour*; nor could have displayed any of those *more excellent Perfections* of *Justice, Mercy*, and the like, in which the *Glory* of the Almighty principally consists. These have *no place*, but where there are *Subjects* capable
 of

not to be gratified in Religion.

II

of obeying or disobeying. The proper Tryal of S E R M.
which Obedience, is that *Freedom of Will*, which, I.
according as it is determined in different Circum-
stances by the *reasonableness of what is good* or the
intiments of what is evil, renders the *Agent* mo-
rally good or evil. God therefore, according to
his own good pleasure, places men in all variety
of Circumstances in this probation-state; and the
Justice, and Wisdom, and Goodness of his Go-
vernment consists in finally judging them all with
Equity, according to their respective degrees of
Light and Knowledge. The first Root and
Foundation of Virtue, is the sincere Desire of
knowing the Will of God, and impartially search-
ing after the Truth: And, as a proper Tryal of
this disposition, the Wisdom of God has been
pleased so to order the *Notices* given of himself
to Mankind both by *Nature* and *Revelation*, that
if any man will do his Will, he shall know of the
doctrine; and, if he desires not to practise it, even
the knowledge of it shall be hid from him: To him
that bath, shall be given; and from him that bath
not, shall be taken away even that which he bath.
By the Light of *Nature*, God manifests himself
to men in the works of *Creation*; visibly enough,
to those who, as *St Paul* expresses it, seek the
Lord, if haply they may feel after him, and find
him: But yet at the same time in such a manner,
as that vicious and ill-disposed men, seeing, may
still not see; and hearing, may still not hear; but
may go on to ascribe the most perfect works of
infi-

S E R M. infinite Wisdom, to *Fate*, to *Chance*, to *Nothing*. By

I. *Revelation*, God has declared his *Mercy* toward Sinners: signifying unto them, that as a great King over numerous Nations, consistently with the Laws of his universal Kingdom, pardons, in some rebellious City, by the interposition of his beloved Son, as many as, by his Son's invitation and persuasion, return to their Duty; so also will God, the supreme Governour of the Universe, accept all those, whom the Spirit of Christ, (inviting them either under the State of *Nature*, by such *Preachers of righteousness* as was *Noah* and the *Patriarchs*; or under the *Law*, by *Moses* and the *Prophets*; or under the *Gospel*, by our *Lord himself* and his *Apostles*) whom (I say) by any of these means, the Spirit of Christ shall bring to Repentance. And the *Evidences* of this *Revelation*, (in the same manner, and for the same reason, as the *Evidences* of God in the Works of *Creation*) are fitted to satisfy an unprejudiced Mind, and yet are not such as cannot be resisted. When the *Jews* demanded of our Saviour such a Sign, as was given to their Fathers when the *Heavens* rained down *Manna* for them to eat, *John* vi. 6. he would not gratify them with a new miracle, but gave them the true interpretation of the antient one: *I am*, says he, *the Bread of Life*; *the Bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World*. Again, Mat. xvi. when the Pharisees asked of him a Sign from Heaven; his Answer was, *Luke* xii. 26. *Ye Hypocrites,*

ye can discern the face of the Sky and of the Earth; SERM.
 but how is it, that ye do not discern this Time? re- I.
 ferring them to the Prophecies, which much more
 plainly pointed out the Time of his coming, than
 ever the face of the Sky fore-signified the Weather.
 These Prophecies he fulfilled, in his Life and by
 his Death; by many miraculous Actions, and mi-
 raculous Sufferings. And when he was raised up
 the third day, God shewed him openly; not to all
 the people, Acts x. 41. but unto Witnesses chosen
 before of God, and commanded to preach unto the
 people: God here likewise doing, not every thing
 that could be done, not every thing that unreason-
 able men might expect should be done, but what
 he himself saw fit and proper to be done. Ac-
 cording to that affectionate observation of our
 Saviour, Luke iv. 25. *I tell you of a truth, many
 widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, but —
 unto none of them was he sent, save unto — a wi-
 dow of Sarepta: And many Lepers were in Israel in
 the time of Eliseus the Prophet, and none of them
 was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.* God
 has given us Faculties, to enable us to search af-
 ter and to find the Truth; and he expects we
 should attend with an impartial and unprejudiced
 mind (which is the proper Duty of rational Crea-
 tures) to the Light he thinks fit to afford us. *Why,
 even of yourselves, says our Saviour, judge ye not
 what is right? Luke xii. 57.* They who do thus
 judge; who, with a mind desirous to do the Will
 of God, receive and embrace the doctrine of
 Truth;

SERMON. Truth; not carelessly, credulously, and implicitly; but with reason, with examination, with attention, with such impartial consideration and inquiry, as enables men to find (by observation and care) what others are blind to, and to be ready always to give a reason of the Hope that is in them; These are the persons, whom the Scripture commends for their Faith; for having the Virtue of Faith; in opposition to the Vice of Infidelity, and to the Folly of Credulity. For, we walk by Faith, not by Sight, 2 Cor. v. 7. by a rational persuasion, not by Necessity: Seeing (as St Paul elegantly describes it; Seeing,) through a glass (through a defcrying-glass) darkly, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. not beholding, as in a glass (as in * a looking-glass) with open face, 2 Cor. iii. 18. And this is that which makes Faith and Hope to be Virtues: For Hope that is seen, is not Hope; for, what a man seeth, why hath he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it, Rom. viii. 25. The God of Nature, in whom we live and move and have our Being, and who is not far from every one of us, is not visible to mortal eyes: But the Light of Nature affords reasonable men, very great Arguments to believe and trust in him; and this, is a commendable and well-grounded Faith. For Faith is the Substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: And the commendation of Moses's patience in Egypt, before God's revealing them himself to him, was, that he endured, as seeing him who is invisible, Heb. xi. 27. The Evidences

vidences of natural reason and of the most demonstrable Truths, do not force themselves upon all men; but to the impartial and attentive, to the unprejudiced and considerate, they appear in their full Strength; and, for that reason, it is an Act of Virtue to be guided by them. For the same reason, in matters of Revelation likewise: Blessed, says our Saviour, are they that have not seen, and yet have believed, John xx. 29. That is, Not, they who are credulous, and believe without reason; but they who like the Bereans, are convinced of the Truth by searching into the grounds of it. The Trial of whose Faith, saith St Peter, will be found unto Praise and Honour and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory, 1 Pet. i. 7. This is the character the Scripture gives us of the Virtue of Faith; and the commendation of those who are eminent for having it. On the contrary, they who by prejudices and vicious inclinations are prevented from searching after the Truth, and, instead of attending to and examining what is right, seek rather for Cavils industriously to evade the evidence and conviction of it; these are the persons whom the Scripture with the greatest severity condemns for their infidelity, as being an evil and adulterous generation. The uncircumcision which is by nature, saith St Paul, if it fulfil the Law, shall it not judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost

SERMON. *doſt transgreſs the Law?* Rom. ii. 27. And our

I Saviour; *The men of Nineveh*, ſays he, *ſhall riſe in judgment with this generation, and ſhall condemn it; becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas,*

Mat. xii.

41.

and behold a greater than Jonas is here. Perſons thus reſiſting the Truth, our Lord, after the firſt and ſecond admonition, rejected; and reſuſed to give them any further Signs: and commanded his Diſciples in like manner, to *ſhake off the duſt of their feet for a teſtimony againſt them*, and not continue to *caſt their pearls before ſwine*. God had dealt with the Jews of old, after the ſame manner: *Pſal. lxxxi. 12. My people would not hear my voice, and Iſrael would not obey me; So I gave them up unto their own hearts luſts, and let them follow their own imaginations.* And to men in future Ages, who ſhall be found of the ſame temper, the Scripture threatens that God, in juſt anger, ſhall even ſend them *ſtrong deluſion, that they may believe a Lye*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 11. The Effect of mens being in this manner given up for their abuſing the divine patience, is thus expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ. lxxviii. 60. When God heard this, he was wroth and took ſore diſpleaſure at Iſrael: So that he forſook the tabernacle in Silo, even the Tent that he had pitched among men: He delivered their power into captivity, and their beauty into the enemy's band: He gave his people alſo over unto the ſword, and was wroth with his inheritance.* And by our Saviour in his affectionate lamentation over Jeruſalem, Matth. xxiii. 37. O Jeruſalem,

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

How the Law is said to be the strength of sin.

what means Christ gives us the victory, over the law which is [sinners & infirmity] in which is the sting of death, and finally over Death itself, and ~~lastly, I shall draw some practical inferences from the whole~~

The King of David is in, and the strength of his
is the Lord, but thanks be to God which giveth
in the strength through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 E R M. 11 B. Apollon having in the former part
 II. of this Chapter, proved at large the
 truth of the resurrection of Christ, and
 the certainty of the future resurrection of Christi-
 ans, and having from thence taken occasion to
 give a full and particular account of the order
 and manner of the resurrection of the body; he
 concludes his whole discourse with this triumphal
 Vol. IV. C SER.

And that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

S E R M O N II.

How the Law is said to be the
Strength of Sin.

[*A Passion Sermon.*]

1 C O R. XV. 56, 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin
is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth
us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

S E R M.
II.

THE Apostle having in the former part
of this Chapter, proved at large the
truth of the resurrection of Christ, and
the certainty of the future resurrection of Christi-
ans; and having from thence taken occasion to
give a full and particular account of the order
and manner of the resurrection of the body; he
concludes his whole discourse with this triumphal
exclamation; *So then when this corruptible shall
have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have
put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the
saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in
victory,*

victory, i. e. utterly and for ever, O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. SERM. II.

I shall endeavour 1st, To explain the words briefly, and shew in what Sense Sin is said to be the sting of death, and the law the strength of sin. 2^{dly}, I shall endeavour to show how and by what means Christ gives us the victory, over the law which is the strength of sin, over Sin which is the sting of death, and finally over Death itself; And lastly, I shall draw some practical Inferences from the whole.

First, I shall endeavour to shew in what Sense Sin is said to be the sting of death, and the law the strength of sin. That by Sin's being the sting of death, is meant that Sin is the cause of Death, and that 'tis Sin only that makes death terrible, is evident. The first mention we find of Death's being in the World, is upon Adam's committing the first transgression; In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17. And the cause of the continuance of its dominion ever since in the World, is the conformity of the rest of mankind to that of their Forefather; As by one man sin first entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death has since passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; Rom. v. 12. The Apostle lays it down as a maxim, that the cause of the dominion of death, is sin; and because it

C 2

might

SERM.

II.



might be objected that since Sin is not imputed where there is no law, therefore those who lived between *Adam* and *Moses*, without any express revealed Law, should seem not to be concluded under the sentence of death; he adds, that even in *that* time, men had some discovery of the Will of God; So that before the delivery of *Moses's* law Sin was in the World; and therefore death did reign from *Adam* to *Moses*, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of *Adam's* transgression; that is, who had not indeed like *Adam* sinned against a positive and immediate Revelation of the Will of God, with an express threatning of death annexed; but yet had sinned against such a law, as they had sufficient reason to be assured was a discovery of the Will of God. The Scripture is very exceeding full in this point; inculcating every where, that as the knowledge of God and Obedience to his commands is life, so the immediate and necessary consequence of Sin is death. *When lust has conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death;* St. James i. 15. *What Fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death,* Rom. vi. 21. and ver. 23. *the wages of sin is death.* Moreover, as Sin is the cause of death, so also is it *That* only which makes death itself terrible. 'Tis not barely the separation of Soul and Body, which is the terror of death; but that separation, as inflicted by, and accompanied with, the wrath of God.

God. Death may possibly be otherwise so far S E R M.
 from terrible, that it may be and often is expect- II.
 ed by good men with joy and comfort, as an en- 
 trance into life and happiness. 'Tis Sin only
 which is the horror of death, and which gives it
 that sting, which makes it really insupportable
 even to the most distant thought. When the
 death of the Body is the forerunner of that death
 of the Soul, from which there is no hopes of re-
 lease, but the wrath of God must abide on it for
 ever; then is it that death appears truly dread-
 ful and terrible. This is that which makes
 wicked men, conscious of their own guilt, and
 sensible of the wrath of God hanging over their
 heads, so amazed at the approach and even the
 thoughts of death: They cannot bear to think
 on so affrighting a prospect, but are even over-
 whelmed and swallowed up with astonishment and
 despair: Not that they so dread death barely and
 in itself, (*for they could call on hills to fall on them,*
and to the mountains to cover them; they could seek
death when they cannot find it, and desire to die
when death shall flee from them, Rev. ix. 6.) but
 'tis the consequences of death, That sting which
 Sin gives it, that they are so terribly *and so justly*
afraid of.

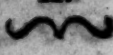
But to proceed: *The strength of Sin*, saith the
 Apostle, *is the law*; The strength of Sin, viz.
 that which gives it its power and efficacy. 'Tis
 evident that Sin is the transgression of the law,
 and that *where there is no law there is no trans-*
gression,

S E R M. *gression*, Rom. iv. 15. *By the law therefore is the*
 II. *knowledge of sin*, Rom. iii. 20. or as the Apostle
 more fully expresses himself, ch. vii. ver. 7 and 8,
I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not
known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not
covet; But sin taking occasion by the commandment,
wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; For
without the law sin is dead: that is, the know-
 ledge of Sin must needs be, by the knowledge
 and promulgation of the law that forbids it.
 But this is not all; For in this sense, by every
 declaration of the Will of God, by every com-
 mand and prohibition, is the knowledge of Sin;
 and so the Gospel itself might as properly be sty-
 led the strength of Sin, as the law. Since there-
 fore by the *Law*, the Apostle plainly means That
 discovery of the Will of God which was made to
 mankind before the Coming of Christ; and par-
 ticularly that which was given to the *Jews*; in
 opposition to the Christian or Gospel-dispensation;
 'tis certain that by its being *the strength of sin*,
 must be understood Something more, than bare-
 ly its being the occasion of the knowledge of Sin.
 It remains therefore, that it must signify the ma-
 king *such* a discovery of the heinous nature and
 guilt of Sin, as yet either not to afford a possi-
 bility of avoiding it, or not to discover any suf-
 ficient means of recovering from it. Now in
 what sense, and how far this may be truly appli-
 cable to the *Jewish Law*, is of some difficulty to
 determine: For if the *Jews under the law* had
 neither

neither any possibility of avoiding Sin, nor yet any sufficient means of recovering from the guilt of it, it would follow that people were in much harder circumstances than the representations which the Scripture makes to us of God's dispensations and dealings with them allows us to suppose :) I shall therefore for the clearing this whole matter, and to show both in what sense the Law is called the Strength of Sin, and how our Saviour has given us the victory over it, (which was the first thing I proposed to speak to,) endeavour briefly to prove these following propositions. *First*, That the Original Law of God requires exact, perfect, and unsinning obedience; which since Man through the weakness and corruption of his nature is not capable of performing, men are all thereby necessarily concluded under Sin. *Secondly*, That that Law, under which the Jews were, so far as it is distinguished from, and opposed to, the Grace or Gospel of Christ; is the same with the Original Law of God, in its full force and severity. *Thirdly*, That yet God never dealt with Men according to the strictness and rigour of that Law, but always anticipated the favour of the Gospel, and dealt with men according to the Gracious Terms of the New Covenant. *Fourthly*, That our Saviour at his appearance, openly promulged and declared to all the World the less severe Terms of this Covenant of Grace, and by that means totally freed Men from the fear and bondage of that rigorous Law,

II.

SERMON which was really in force until the time of his appearing; excepting only as God was pleased to anticipate the Grace and Favour of the New Covenant, at first by the secret dispensations of his Mercy, and the obscure promises of a Redeemer to come; and afterwards, as the time of the promise drew near, by the more open and plain declarations of the Prophets. *First*, The Original Law of God requires exact, perfect, and unfinning Obedience; which since Man through the weakness and corruption of his Nature, is not capable of performing, Men are all thereby necessarily concluded under Sin. This is evident from the consideration of the Nature of God, and of the true and original notion of a Law. The Authority of God being supreme, and the condition of his creatures absolutely dependant; Obedience entire and constant, universal and perpetual, is plainly and naturally due to his commands: The nature also of a Law being to require obedience; and provision for reconciliation after a violation of it, not being originally in the condition of a Law, but only an after-provision of Favour and Mercy; 'tis plain that originally to the Laws of God, there is due a perfect and unfinning Obedience. That therefore which the original Law of God declares, is this; that as God is himself a Being of infinite purity and holiness, so he cannot be pleased with any creature, that imitates not that purity according to the utmost capacity of its nature; that

as there are eternal measures of Good and Evil, S E R M
Right and Wrong, which are as unchangeable as II.
the nature of God and the constitution of things, 
so God cannot possibly delight in any creature that
observes not these essential and fundamental laws
of his Kingdom; that therefore men who are
made capable of knowing God, are bound to
worship him as God, without giving any part of
that honour to another which is due only to *him*, or
paying *him* that honour which is due to him, in a
way not becoming the excellency of his nature;
and in brief, that knowing the eternal rules of ju-
stice and equity, honesty and fidelity, temperance
and sobriety, to be the laws of his Kingdom, they
are bound to be true and just in all their dealings
one with another with all simplicity and sincerity
of mind, and to live in Sobriety, Temperance,
and Chastity, with all Purity and Holiness: And
this they are bound to do, constantly and at all
times; the original law of God assuring indeed
those that obey it in all points of a reward and
the favour of God; but not providing any ex-
piation, nor pointing with any certainty at the
means of reconciliation, for those who shall at
any time have transgressed and incurred God's
displeasure. 'Tis true the World always had
great and reasonable hopes, that God would be
merciful to returning Sinners, and accept repent-
ance instead of perfect innocence; but then these
hopes were not founded on the Original condition
of the law of God; but either on mens natural
notion

SERMON. notion of the mercifulness and placability of the

II. Divine nature (such as the Heathen World has always depended upon;) and these were only probable and hopeful presumptions; or else on the obscure promises made to *Adam* and the Patriarchs of a *Messias* to come, (such as the holy and devout men before the giving of the Law of *Moses* grounded their expectations of mercy upon;) and these were the first beginnings of the declaration of the Covenant of Grace. The original law of God therefore, required perfect unfinning obedience; and thereby, since no man was able to perform it, necessarily concluded all men under Sin. 2dly, That Law, under which the *Jews* lived, so far as is it distinguished from, and opposed to, the Grace or Gospel of Christ; is the same with the original Law of God in its full Force and Severity. This is evident from its retaining and confirming all the moral precepts of Nature, with express promise indeed *that the man which doth these things shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5; but with most rigorous threatnings also, *that Cursed should be every one that continued not in all things which were written in the book of the Law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10; not affording any expiation for great and wilful sins past, but denouncing death without mercy against them; nor indeed allowing any atonement even for smaller Sins, but such as plainly owed all their efficacy, to their being types of the mercy of the Covenant of grace. The same also is clear from the

the Apostles attributing all those severities to the **S E R M.**
Jewish Law, which are properly true only of the **II.**
 original law of God; and his opposing it directly
 to the grace and mercy of the Gospel-Covenant.
The law, saith he, is holy, and the commandment
holy, and just and good, Rom. vii. 12: 'twas such
 as if it were exactly obeyed, would certainly justifi-
 fy a man, i. e. make him appear righteous in
 the Sight of God, and intitle him to the reward
 of obedience; *the doers of the law shall be justified,*
Rom. ii. 13. But the corrupt estate of human
 nature being such, that no man can obey this law
 in all points without sinning, but that in *many*
things we offend all, for all have sinned and come
short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23; hence
 the law which was ordained to the end, that men
 obeying it might attain life and happiness, served
 only to their condemnation, by working in their
 Consciences a Conviction of their duty which
 they ought to have performed, and of the Wrath
 of God hanging over their heads for not perform-
 ing it; *The commandment, saith he, which was*
ordained to life, I found to be unto death, Rom. vii.
10. And upon this account (I suppose) are those
 so frequent expressions of the Apostle; *that the*
law worketh wrath, Rom. iv. 15; *that by the*
deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in the
sight of God, Rom. iii. 20; *that as many as are*
of the works of the law are under the curse, Gal. iii.
10. *And that the law entered that the offence might*
abound, Rom. v. 20; that is to say, not that it
 was

SEE WAS designed to that end, but that in fact and by
 II consequence it *did* become a means of aggravating
 sin and rendring it more exceedingly criminal.
 'Tis true the Law did indeed appoint certain sacrifices of expiation for sin; but such as had not in themselves any efficacy to expiate sin, any otherwise than as they typified that great sacrifice which was once to be offered for the Sins of the whole World: The Tabernacle was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect*, Heb. x. 1. Hence though those good men, who lived before the coming of Christ, were indeed justified; yet they are said to be justified, how? not by the works of the law, but by faith; as St. Paul reasoneth in his whole fourth Chapter to the *Romans*; His meaning is; They trusted not to ritual and ceremonious performances, but looked through the types and shadows of the law to the promised Messiah, being fully persuaded that what God had promised he would assuredly perform; and this was counted unto them for righteousness. Thus of *Abraham* particularly 'tis said by the Apostle, *that he was not justified by the works of the law, so as to have wherewith to glory before God, but that he was justified*

ified by Faith: and in like manner all the holy S E R M O N
men, who lived under the law, did not expect II.
to be justified in the sight of God by the works 
of the law, but by their faith in God, and trust
in his promises. So the law was their School-
master to bring them unto Christ: and though
they knew that nothing in the law could of itself
avail effectually to the forgiveness of sins, yet
they continued with patience walking in the com-
mandments of God, and waiting for the conso-
lation and redemption of *Israel*; and accordingly
when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth
his Son, made [of a Woman, made] under the law,
that he might redeem those that were under the law.
The Jewish Law therefore, so far as it was distin-
guished from, and opposed to the grace or gospel
of Christ, was the same with the original law of
God in its full force and severity; and no flesh
could be justified thereby.

3dly, YET God never dealt with men accord-
ing to the strictness and severity of that Law,
but always anticipated the favour of the gospel,
and dealt with men according to the gracious
terms of the new Covenant. Thus though no
flesh could be justified by the law, yet both the
Patriarchs who lived *before* the law (as I have
already observed,) and all Holy men who lived
under Law, were justified; and this their justifi-
cation *was by Faith*, i. e. by the terms of that
new Covenant, *which in the fulness of time* was to
be promulged openly and plainly to the whole
world.

S E R M. world. Wherefore though the Law appointed
H. no expiation for great and presumptuous Sins,
 yet God always pardoned Sinners upon their true
 repentance, (as appears in the case of *David* and
 others;) and as the times of the Gospel grew
 nearer and nearer, began by degrees to declare by
 his Prophets, that he would do so. *David*, when
 he had committed those crying Sins of Adultery
 and Murder, acknowledges that the severity of
 the law allowed no Sacrifice of expiation for him;
Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee,
but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings, Ps. li. 16:
 Yet he hoped that upon his hearty repentance,
 forgiveness would not be impossible to be ob-
 tained at the Hands of God; *A broken and con-*
trite heart, O God, saith he, thou wilt not despise,
 ver. 17; and the event discovered that he did
 indeed obtain it. And God afterward by the
 Prophet *Ezekiel* declared publickly to the whole
 people of the *Jews*, that *when a wicked man turn-*
eth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which
is lawful and right, he should save his soul alive.
 Thus though the Law, strictly speaking, was
 in force with its full severity, till the appear-
 ing of our Saviour, yet God never dealt with
 men according to that severity, but always anti-
 cipating the Favour of the Gospel, and judged
 men by the terms of the Covenant of grace.
 The Law was by *Moses*, Grace and Truth by
Christ.

ably, THIS

ably, THIS new Covenant of grace, which, SERM.
 before the coming of our Saviour lay hid in the II.
 secret dispensations of God's mercy, and began in
 part and by degrees to be discovered, first by the
 obscure promises of a Messiah to come, and after-
 wards by the more plain declarations of the Pro-
 phets; was at our Saviour's Appearance openly
 established, and the terms of it publickly pro-
 mulged to the whole World; so as to deliver
 men entirely from all fear of that rigour of the
 Law, which the Apostle styles *the strength of Sin*.
 This deliverance of men by the Gospel from the
 burden and severity of the Law, the Apostle in
 the Text calls a Victory; and this Victory our
 Saviour obtained for us, principally by these two
 things: 1st, By giving himself a sacrifice and
 propitiation for sins past, from which men could
 not be justified by the Law; and 2^{dly}, By pro-
 posing openly the gracious terms of Faith and
 Repentance to those who believed and were de-
 sirous to obey him. 1st, He gave himself a sa-
 crifice and propitiation for sins past, from which
 men could not be justified by the Law, viz.
 When it was not consistent with the Wisdom of
 God in his government of the World to let Sin
 go unpunished, and yet he would have mercy
 upon sinful man, *he sent his own Son into the world*
in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear our punishment,
and so for sin (or as the words may most properly
 be rendred, *by being a sacrifice for sin*) *condemned*
sin in the flesh, Rom. viii. 3. Hence Christ is
 said

S. A. R. M. said to have obtained redemption for us, Heb. ix.

II.

12. to have put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26. to have given his life a ransom for many, St. Mat. xx. 28. For many; that is, for all those that should believe and obey him; as it is explained by St. Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 6. to have bought us with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 20. to be the propitiation for our sins, Joh. ii. 22 and to have purchased a church with his blood, Acts xx. 28; with many the like expressions, which do all plainly signify, that Christ, by his death and the shedding of his most precious blood, has made full and sufficient satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of the whole world; that is, for as many as shall out of the world flee unto him, and submit themselves to the terms of the new covenant whereof he is made the mediator. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead works to serve the living God, Heb. xi. 13, 14. 2dly, Our Saviour has openly proposed to all the world, the gracious terms of Faith and Repentance; of Faith, that men believe on him as the Saviour of the world and the Messiah that was to come, professing themselves subjects of his Kingdom; and of Repentance, that men turn from the evil of their ways, and conform their lives to the laws of that Kingdom, whose subjects they profess them-

themselves to be: That they believe on him SERM.
 whom God hath sent; and that they live suitably II.
 to that belief, with sincere endeavours to obey
 the whole gospel, and hearty sorrow and perpet-
 ually labouring after Amendment, for all their
 failures in that obedience. These are now the
 gracious terms of the Gospel, which in the *New*
Testament are every where preached as the condi-
 tions of Salvation. This was the Sum of *John Bap-*
tist's preaching, who was sent to prepare the way
 before Christ; *Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Hea-*
ven is at hand, St. *Matth.* iii. 2. With this our Sa-
 viour himself began his ministry: *The time is ful-*
filled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, Repent
ye and believe the Gospel, *Mark* i. 15. With this he
 concluded his charge to his Disciples after his re-
 surrection; *Go ye into all the world, and preach*
the Gospel to every creature: He that believeth and
is baptized, i. e. that believeth and enters into
 an obligation to live suitably to that belief, shall
 be saved, *Mark* xvi. 15 and 16. This his dis-
 ciples after his ascension published to all the
 world; *preaching repentance and remission of sins in*
his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,
Luke xxiv. 47. Lastly, this is the Sum of all
 their exhortations, contained in their epistles to
 the several churches which had before believed
 through their preaching. And because this Re-
 pentance or turning from a life of sin, unto a life
 of righteousness, is the sum of Religion under
 the Gospel dispensation, therefore is it in Scrip-
 -ture

S E R M. ture expressed by great variety of phrases, to the
 II. different capacities and understandings of men.

 Sometimes it is called *turning to the Lord*, that those who by a course of sin had been enemies to God, might by forsaking their sins and following after righteousness, be reconciled to him: Sometimes it is called *Conversion*, a word of the same import with that of *turning to the Lord*: Sometimes it is called *the renewing of our minds*: Sometimes *putting on the new man*, elsewhere *the new creature*, to signify an entire change and reformation of life: and most frequently it is stiled *Regeneration, the new birth, newness of life*, and the like; All which phrases are made use of to imply this one thing, that *those who have been dead in trespasses and sins*, those who by any means have been engaged in a wicked course of life, must as it were by a new birth, by a thorough and entire reformation of life and manners, enter into a new course of life, and begin a life of righteousness and holiness. So careful has the Spirit of God been, that no one should be ignorant of that which is so much his necessary and indispensable Duty. Nothing is now required of us but that λογική λατρεία, that reasonable service, of forsaking our sins, and obeying in our lives and actions those commands of God, which are so reasonable in themselves, and so evidently perfective of our nature, so necessarily, approved by the minds of men, and the reason of their obligation so immediately acknowledged by the

conscience, *that they may truly be said to be written in our hearts*, Heb. viii. 10; Yet to encourage our practise, they are moreover most fully explained, most earnestly inculcated, and most strongly enforced by the most powerful motives in the New Testament. We are not now obliged to those numberless ritual performances, which in the Scripture are called *weak and beggarly elements, and a burden which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear*: Our Religion consists not now in such outward Ceremonies, whose observance was difficult, and their signification oft-times obscure: *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down from above? Or who shall descend into the deep to bring up Christ again from the dead? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart*, Rom. x. 6, 7 and 8. that is; the Gospel-Covenant consists not of such strict, difficult terms, as are above the reach of our knowledge or our strength; but such as may easily be understood by us, and performed also by the assistance of Christ that strengtheneth us. A sincere endeavour to perform our whole duty, is the condition of the Gospel; and he that so desires to do the will of God, can neither want knowledge to understand his duty, nor power to perform it: He shall know of Christ's doctrine, whether it be of God; and when he comes to practise it, shall find *his yoke easy and his burthen*

S E R M.
II.

S E R M light. In a word, the Terms that Christ by his death has purchased for us, are plainly these; that whereas by the transgression of the Original law of God which required perfect and unsinning Obedience, all men were become guilty before God; and whereas by the addition of the Ceremonial rites and sacrifices of the *Jewish* law, which in their own nature could not avail to expiate Sin, men could not be justified from the transgressions they had committed; it is now declared by the Gospel-Covenant that whosoever believing in the name of Christ shall repent him heartily of his former Sins, and for the future endeavour with all his might to obey sincerely, tho' not without infirmities, all the Commandments of God: shall, through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, have his sincerity accepted instead of perfect obedience, and thereby be justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law: And this is that *justification by faith only*, which St. Paul in his Epistle to the *Romans* so often opposes to being justified by the works of the law.

Having thus endeavoured briefly to explain what is meant by the Law being the Strength of Sin, and by what means our Saviour has delivered us from it, or given us the victory over it, I should proceed now in the 2^d place to consider how he gives us the Victory over Sin which is the Sting of Death: And this he does, by delivering us 1st from the dominion, and 2^{dly} from the guilt and punishment

ment of Sin. First, he frees men from that bondage and thralldom, into which Sin has reduced them; and then those who are so freed he delivers from that punishment, which must have been the necessary consequence of their being intralld to Sin. But the time not permitting me to enter upon this, I shall only draw an inference or two from what has been already said, and so conclude.

And 1st from what has been said, we may understand why St. Paul in his writings concerning the Jewish Law, always describes it as of such severity by which *no flesh could possibly be justified*: when yet 'tis plain God never dealt with men according to *that severity*: and why he so exceedingly magnifies the grace and mercy of the Gospel, notwithstanding it be evident that God always dealt with men according to *that indulgence*. Now the plain solution of this difficulty is this. The Apostle speaking of the Law, is not to be understood complexly of God's whole dispensation and dealing with the Jews, but of the Law properly and strictly, as it is distinguished from and opposed to the Gospel; viz. such as it was in itself, and such as it really would have been, if the Gospel-Covenant, had never been established. For though there *was* indeed indulgence *under* the Law, yet that indulgence was not *from* the Law, but an anticipation, as I have said, of the mercy of the Gospel. The Law itself was not therefore the less severe, because the indulgence of the Gospel extended itself backward even under

SERMON. the times of the Law; neither is the mercy of

II. the Gospel to be therefore the less magnified, because it is no other than what had in effect before been indulged under the Law. For since the one was in itself really as severe as it is described, and had no indulgence but what was borrowed from and founded upon the other, there is no reason at all why this should be considered when the one is spoken of in opposition to the other; which is the state of the Apostle's argument: and therefore he most reasonably aggravates the severity of the Law, and upon the comparison most justly magnifies the mercy and favour of the Gospel: Gal. ii. 21. *If righteousness came by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

2dly, FROM what has been said, we may learn, that the whole design and effect of the Gospel, *was not to destroy, but to fulfil the Law.* The whole design of all God's dispensations with mankind, is to prevent or destroy Sin. This the Law was to do originally, by requiring perfect and unsinning obedience: But when instead of this, it only concluded all men under Sin; the design of the Gospel was to effect the same, by requiring and by accepting Repentance; which being no other than renewed Obedience, 'tis plain the Gospel does not destroy, but establish the Law. The severity indeed of the Law was so far to be qualified by the indulgence of the Gospel, that it might not be any longer the *Strength of Sin*: But the Gospel did not take away the obligation

igation of the Law, so as to be itself the cause SERM.
 and the occasion of sinning. The moral Law II.
 denounced a Curse against every one that conti-
 nued not in all the works thereof to do them;
 and the Gospel delivers all those from this Curse,
 who by true Repentance renew their Obedience:
 The Ceremonial Law was an insupportable bur-
 den of rites, insufficient of themselves to make
 any expiation for sin; and the Gospel, by exhi-
 biting the true and sufficient expiation, has deli-
 vered all men from the burden of this yoke. As
 therefore those persons [Judaizing Christians] in
 the primitive times were very unreasonable, who
 contended that any of these ritual observations
 were of necessity to be kept up after the coming
 of Christ; so those perverters of Christianity in
 later ages are on the other side much more un-
 reasonable, who contend that the moral Law has
 been abolished by Christ. The Gospel accepts
 indeed the terms, of *Faith and Repentance*; but
 'tis only for the sake of the *Fruit and Effect* of
 them, which is *renewed obedience*. So that no-
 thing can be more absurd, than for Christians to
 think themselves excused from holiness of life
 and those duties of Religion, which as the un-
 changeable nature of God and of the things
 themselves had made the necessary requisites, so
 the Gospel also has made the express condition of
 their being acceptable to God. Our Saviour
 himself tells us, that *Not every one that saith unto*
me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of
D 4
Heaven,

SERM. *Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father*
 III *which is in Heaven.* The Gospel itself speaks
 aloud, and tells us, that we must deny ungodliness
 and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of that great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The Apostle St. Paul, That great vindicator of the liberties of Christians, warns and persuades us, and repeats it with great earnestness over and over again: *Be not deceived; and let no man deceive you with vain words; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, and so on; i. e. no one that allows himself and continues in any one known vice; shall, according to the terms of the Gospel of Christ, inherit the Kingdom of God. For not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, saith our Saviour, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

Lastly, From what has been said, we may learn to reconcile the Severity and the Compassion of God; the Severity, in giving a Law, which required sinless Obedience; and the Compassion, in mitigating it, by the Grace and Mercy of the Gospel; which Grace extended itself backwards to good men under the Law; and the Severity will reach forward to the impenitent under the Gospel.

Gospel. O the depth of the riches both of the SERM.
 wisdom and knowledge of God? how unsearchable II.
 are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 

To conclude therefore, Let us then heartily set about the reformation of our lives, and by obedience to God's commands endeavour to walk worthy of that Religion we profess, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Let us consider and admire the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, in restoring Men to a capacity of attaining that happiness by the obedience of the second Covenant, which they utterly forfeited by the transgression of the first; and let us not frustrate the grace of God by the disobedience of our lives, lest there remain no more Sacrifice for our Sin: *For if the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? For if we sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth; that is, if Christians live as those who know not God, in the Practise of any vice or debauchery whatsoever: there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, no new Dispensations; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.* 

S E R M O N III.

How CHRIST has enabled us to
conquer Sin.

[*Preached on Easter Day.*]

I COR. XV. 56, 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin
is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth
us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

SERM.
III.

W H E N he who was the desire and expectation of Nations appeared first in the World, it highly concerned all those who looked for redemption in *Israel*, rightly to understand the end and design of his coming: And if we who live at this distance of time after his appearing in the flesh, expect yet to be partakers of the common Salvation which he has purchased for us; it highly concerns *Us* also to understand wherein that Salvation consists, and how and on what conditions he has purchased it for us. The *Jews* who lived about the time of
his

his coming, misled by a partial application and S E R M.
wrong interpretation of the prophecies that went III.
before concerning him, expected *a temporal prince*
to appear in the power and splendor of this world,
who should deliver their nation from that slavery
into which the Romans had subdued them, and re-
store again the kingdom to Israel; They expected
that Jerusalem should have become once again
the Head of the nations, and the glory of the
whole Earth; *They expected that Messiah the prince*
should have come to sit upon the throne of David
for ever, and to have established a kingdom among
them which should have had no end. And so in-
deed he did; though in a sense far different
from what they expected. Nay, his Disciples
themselves were for a great while so blinded with
the splendor of this opinion, that they understood
none of those prophecies that related to his Hu-
miliation, Sufferings, and Death; As appears
from St. Peter's undertaking to rebuke him when
he began to foretel *how many things he should suffer*
of the Jews; and from his Disciples asking him,
even after his resurrection, if he would at this
time restore again the kingdom to Israel. But
as he himself a little before his death witnessed
before Pontius Pilate that good confession, *that*
his kingdom was not of this world: so his Disciples,
after his resurrection and ascension, began to
have their eyes opened, and to understand that
the design of his coming into the World was
wholly Spiritual. And as at the descending of
the

SE 2 11. the Holy Ghost they were more perfectly instructed in the nature and end of That his Spiritual kingdom, so did they afterward in their inspired writings deliver to us, what they then received from that unerring instructor: Namely, that the true end and design of Christ's coming into the World, was to deliver men, not from their Temporal Enemies, but to save them from their Sins. Now This he does, by delivering us *1st*, from the power and dominion of Sin; and *2^{dly}*, from the guilt and punishment thereof. *1st*, He delivers men from that Bondage and Slavery into which the practice of Sin has reduced them; and then those who are so freed, he delivers from that *punishment* which must have been the necessary consequence of their being enslaved to Sin. These are the two great designs which exhaust the whole history of our Saviour; there being nothing that he either said or did, which was not directed to one of these great ends. *First* then, We are to show, how Christ delivers us from the *dominion* or *practice* of Sin. That the service of Sin is an intolerable thralldom; All who are so unhappy as to be engaged in any habit of Vice, do fully experience; and it may also easily be observed by others. This deplorable state, is fitly described by Solomon under the person of a foolish young man, drawn away with the enticements of a Strange woman; *Prov. vii. 22. He goeth after her straightway as an ox gath to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart*

strike

Strike through his liver, as a bird catcheth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. This *SERM. III.*

is the case of all, who are under the dominion and habit of any Sin; they know not whither they are going, but are hurried away blindfold with every temptation, being intangled in the snare of the Devil, and taken captive by him at his will. Hence such a state of Sin is styled in Scripture a *yoke, burden, captivity, bondage, thraldom*, and the like; and habitual Sinners are described to be *dead in Sin*, to let Sin reign in their mortal bodies; to be *sold under Sin*, to be in *captivity to the law of Sin and Death*, to be *hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin*, to be such as *cannot cease from Sin*, and, by a phrase which includes all these, to be *Servants of Sin*; being constrained to obey it in the lusts thereof, even against the dictates of their reason and conscience; *for to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. vi. 16. Now That which Christ has actually done for us in order to the delivering us from the dominion of Sin, may briefly be expressed in these two propositions; 1st, that he had made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to mankind; and 2^{dly}, that he has enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. 1st, He has made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to mankind. He has plainly and fully made known to us, the heinousness of Sin, and the necessity of Repentance; he has most exactly defined the

S E R M. the bounds of our duty, and given us an example
 III. of the practice of it in his own life; he has more
 clearly revealed the great the great motives of
 Religion, and urged them upon men with much
 stronger advantage. To show these things at
 large, would be to repeat the whole history of
 our Saviour; and no man can read the New
 Testament wherein That history is contained,
 without observing that all his discourses and all
 the actions of his life, were directed principally
 to These ends: To convince men that Sin is so
 hateful to God, and so inconsistent with the ho-
 nour of his laws, that he would not pardon it
 even in those whom he designed to have mercy
 upon, without first inflicting the punishment
 that was due to it, upon his only Son. To
 assure men, that a life of Virtue and true Righ-
 teousness, is the only and indispensable condition
 of *That Covenant*, wherein God has promised
 to save them from everlasting destruction. That
 therefore *unless we repent, we must perish*, Luke
 xiii. 5. That *without Holiness, no man shall see
 the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. That no man who con-
 tinues in the practice of any known Sin, *shall in
 any wise enter into the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9.
 and that, however vain men may deceive them-
 selves, no pretence whatsoever, no not of having
preached or worked miracles in the name of Christ,
 shall be accepted instead thereof, *Matth. vii. 21*.
 Further; is it not a very Advantageous stating
 of the bounds of our duty, to have given us such
 a com-

a compleat and perfect rule of Life and manners, SERM.
as the Holy Scriptures cannot but be acknow- III
ledged to be? Is it not a sufficient Security 
against ignorance and mistake in our duty, to
have such a Rule given us as contains in the
plainest words all things needful for our infor-
mation in all necessary truth, and for the confut-
ing of all pernicious errors; for correcting and
reclaiming us from all Sin, and for our instruction
and encouragement in all Righteousness? to
have such a Rule, wherein our duty is set down
both in general and in particulars; with great
variety of expression, repeated, urged, and in-
culcated upon the meanest capacities, and ex-
emplified in the lives of holy men, as patterns
proposed to our imitation? The History of our
Saviour's life, is a compleat example of all vir-
tues; but more especially of Patience, Charity,
and Contempt of the World: His Sermons con-
tain such excellent and perfect rules of Morality,
as have raised the admiration even of the most im-
placable enemies of his Religion; and his Para-
bles are Declarations of the nature and design of
the Gospel-dispensation by such plain and easy
similitudes, as the vulgar were able to bear, and
those who were well-disposed were capable of
understanding. The Sermons of the Apostles
contain such proofs of the truth and certainty of
the Christian Religion, as were necessary to the
conversion of Infidels; and their Epistles are
filled with the inforcements of such Christian Du-
ties,

SER.M. dies, as are necessary to the Salvation of believers;

III.

containing also Exhortations to the practice of special duties, upon particular and emergent occasions. So that every man that sincerely desires to know the will of God and to obey it, without being prejudiced with Partiality and Disputes, with Passions and Interest, may here find his duty written in such legible characters, *that he that runs may read it*: Lastly, Mens duty being thus made known, is it not a most clear and advantageous revelation of the powerful Motives and Inforcements of that duty; to be assured that there is a future state of Rewards and Punishments, wherein God will judge the world in righteousness, and render to every man according to what he has done in the body, whether it be good or evil; and to be assured of the certainty of that state, not by the uncertain and disagreeing conjectures of such men, as undertook to prove it probable by difficult and abstruse reasonings, but by the testimony of one, who by that convincing proof of his Resurrection from the dead, did undeniably demonstrate that he had himself been in that invisible state?

But 2^{dly}, As Christ has thus made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to Mankind, so hath he also enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. As he has provided a sufficient remedy against Ignorance of our duty, so he has likewise made a sufficient provision against our Inability to perform it.

Now

Now this he has done, 1st, By requiring easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. And 2^{dly}, By graciously affording us his assistance, to perform what he so requires. 1st, He requires easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. 'Tis the great and peculiar privilege of the Gospel-dispensation, that whereas the original law of God required perfect unfining obedience, and consequently men in this corrupt estate were thereby of necessity concluded all under Sin; the covenant of mercy established by the Death of Christ, has relaxed that rigour which the Apostle calls the *strength of Sin*, and reduced the condition of Salvation to such terms, as are not impracticable, nay nor indeed *grievous* to human nature, even in this present state; He has reduced it to the gracious terms of Faith, and unfeigned Repentance; a Repentance, and sincere endeavours to obey his Commandments to the best of our Ability for the time to come. But if Christians will still continue in the practice and under the dominion of Sin, notwithstanding this way which Christ has opened for them to Salvation; 'tis their own fault and their extreme folly here, and will be their condemnation and misery hereafter. 'Tis true, such is the corruption of our nature and the weakness of our faculties, that we are not indeed *sufficient of ourselves* to do or think any thing as of ourselves, 2 Cor. iii. 5. But then 'tis true also, that we have a much

S E R M. greater Sufficiency, even that Sufficiency which
 III. is from God, as the Apostle immediately adds:
 which is the second thing whereby I said our Sa-
 viour enables us to obey the will of God, accord-
 ing to that discovery of it which he has made to
 us in the Gospel; he enables us, by graciously
 affording us his assistance, to perform what he
 requires of us. Though we have indeed con-
 tracted much Weakness and Impotency by our
 wilful degeneracy from Goodness, yet That
 Grace which the Gospel offers us for our assistance,
 is sufficient for us: *I can do all things*, saith St.
Paul, through Christ that strengtheneth me, Phil. iv.
 13. Though we are indeed encompassed with
 many and potent enemies, whose business it is
 to tempt us and to deter us from our duty; yet
 are we indued with a power, by which we are
 enabled to resist and to conquer all these tempta-
 tions; *For greater is he that is in us, than he that*
is in the world, 1 John iv. 4. *So that in all these*
things we are more than conquerors through him that
loved us, Rom. viii. 37. God knoweth the frailty
 of our nature, and considereth how many temp-
 tations we are continually liable to; he remembereth
 whereof we are made, and considereth that we are
 but Dust; He knoweth our enemy's strength and
 our own weakness, and therefore he affords us
 the continual assistance of his Holy Spirit, to sup-
 ply our natural want of power. He has pro-
 mised to succour all those who sincerely desire to
 obey his will; and, if we be not wanting in our
 own

own endeavours, we may rely upon him, that he will be faithful to his promise, and not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. x. 13. Thus in order to the delivering us from the habit and power of Sin, our Saviour by making a most clear discovery of the Will of God to Mankind, and by enabling them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery, has put us in our own power, if we for our part will but accept this deliverance, and, by the way which he has opened for us, retreat out of the bondage of Sin and Satan into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Christ has completely performed his Office for us; he has paid the price; he has redeemed us out of captivity: 'Tis our part to take care that we continue not wilfully in the service of Sin, lest we be found to do despite unto the Spirit of Grace, crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame. Now this is what Christ has done for All those in general, to whom the Gospel is preached: But then, 2dly, Those who accept of this deliverance from the dominion of Sin, that is, who by Repentance and true Amendment of life embrace the terms of the Gospel; those, and those only, he further delivers from the guilt and punishment of Sin: And in order to this; 1st, He hath vindicated the honour of God's laws by taking upon himself the punishment of their Sins; and 2dly, He fits

SERMON. at the right hand of God, ready to come in the glory of his Father with his holy Angels, actually to deliver them from That punishment of Sin, which shall finally be inflicted on them that would not be delivered from the dominion of it; even on those who know not God and obey not the Gospel; i. e. who either embraced not the Gospel at all, when it was preached to them; or pretending to embrace it, yet obeyed it not. 1st, He has vindicated the honour of God's laws, by taking upon himself the punishment of their Sins, who repent and embrace the terms of the Gospel. He condescended to be made Sin for us, who himself knew no Sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. To be made Sin for us, i. e. to be made a Sacrifice for our Sins, that we through that expiation might become subjects capable of the mercy of God. He took upon him our Nature, and was clothed in flesh, partly indeed that he might preach the Will of God to mankind in a nearer and more condescending conversation with them; but principally, that he who in the form of God could not suffer, might become capable of suffering by being made in the likeness to Man. He lived a most innocent and spotless life, that he might indeed set us an example that we should follow his steps; but chiefly, because as it was required that the typical Sacrifices under the law should be whole and without blemish; so it was necessary that he, who was to be the real expiatory Sacrifice

fice for the Sins of others, should have none S E R M.
 that needed expiation of his own; *For such an* III.

High priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, Heb. vii. 26. He suffered a shameful and ignominious Death upon the Cross, that he might indeed give us an example of patience and readiness to suffer; but the principal design of it was, that he might put away Sin by the sacrifice of himself, and obtain eternal redemption for us *through Faith in his Blood.* His Resurrection, was the demonstration of this Sacrifice's being accepted by God; and his Ascension into Heaven, was in order to plead the merits of his sufferings before God, and intercede for those, who according to the terms of the Gospel-Covenant should be capable of receiving the gracious benefits purchased by his Death: Wherefore, *2dly,* He now sits at the right hand of God, ready to appear in the glory of his Father with the Holy Angels, actually to deliver all those from the punishment of Sin, who have before been delivered by him from the dominion thereof. This sitting at the right hand of God, signifies his having subdued all his enemies, and his being fully instated in his Regal power; *All things being actually made subject unto him, always excepting him, as St. Paul directs, who did put all things under him. All power both in heaven and earth is now committed unto him; being exalted far above all principality, and power, and might, and*
dominion,
E 3

S E R M. dominion, and every name that is named not only
 III. in this world, but also in that which is to come;
 ~~~~~ God having put all things under his feet, and given  
 him to be the head over all things to the Church.  
 When therefore this his Mediatorial kingdom  
 shall be finished, and the number of his Elect  
 accomplished, then unto them that look for him  
 shall he appear the second time without Sin unto sal-  
 vation, Heb. ix. 28. Then shall he redeem his  
 Elect from death, and ransom them from the  
 power of the grave: Then shall the Sea give up the  
 dead that are in it, and Death and Hell shall deli-  
 ver up the Dead that are in them, and death shall  
 be swallowed up in victory; O Death, where is thy  
 sting! O Grave, where is thy victory! But this  
 deliverance from the first and natural Death,  
 shall be common both to the Just and Unjust.  
 'Tis the Second death that shall be properly and  
 finally the punishment of Sin; and from This,  
 the Just only shall be delivered. *Whosoever be-  
 lieveth on me shall never die*, John xi. 26. that is,  
 (as the words may more properly be rendered)  
*shall not die for ever*. On the Just the Second  
 death shall have no power, but they shall be  
 Priests of God and of Christ; they shall be  
 made compleatly happy both in Body and Soul,  
 and shall reign with him for ever and ever.

THE application I shall make of what hath  
 been said, shall be only in these two brief in-  
 ferences: 1<sup>st</sup>, If Christ delivers no man from the  
 punishment of Sin, who is not first delivered  
 from the service and dominion of it; then no  
 man

man who continues in the service and dominion of Sin, can expect to be delivered from the punishment thereof. Christ *has* indeed given himself a propitiatory Sacrifice, a full, perfect and sufficient Oblation for the Sins of the whole World; but 'tis not that the whole world, or that any particular persons should absolutely and unconditionally be thereby excused from the punishment of Sin; but that all those who by true Repentance turn from Sin and become righteous, should obtain Remission and Reconciliation with God: For he did not die, that he might indulge men *in* Sin, but that he might save them *from* it. Christ *has* indeed brought Life and Immortality to light, and opened an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God; but 'tis not that any unreformed and unrenewed nature should be made partaker of that spiritual Happiness, or be admitted to have a share in those pure and undefiled Rewards; but that those who have broken off their Sins by Repentance, and their Iniquities by Righteousness and shewing mercy to the poor, (which is the Wedding-garment required by our Lord in the Parable,) should be entertained at the eternal Supper of the Lamb: For as impossible as 'tis for God to cease to be holy, or for the purity of the Divine Nature to be reconciled to Sin, so impossible is it for a wicked man to obtain remission whilst he continues wicked, or for a Sinner to be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven. *Be not deceived, saith St. Paul, neither*



S E R M. *fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, that is, no unrighteous person that continues in the practice of any known Sin, shall inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9. Again, Gal. v. 21. having reckoned up the like catalogue of Sins, he adds, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. And Ephes. v. 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 2dly, If Christ delivers no man from the dominion of Sin any otherwise than by giving him a clear knowledge of his duty, and a sufficient power to perform it, then no man who makes not use of that knowledge and power to an actual performance of his duty, can be delivered from the dominion of Sin. Christ has completely performed his office for us; but if We will not also perform what remains for us to do for ourselves; if we will yet chuse rather to continue in the service of Sin, than to come forth into the glorious liberty to which we are called; we must, notwithstanding all that Christ has done for us, continue still under the dominion of Sin, and shall at last fall into the punishment thereof. The imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, (which some have vainly depended upon, while they themselves continue to live in*

in open contempt of his righteous laws,) is a S E R M.  
false and groundless imagination: 'Tis the un- III.

alterable Nature of Things, and the Will of God; that if we expect to be made happy for ourselves, we *must* also become righteous for ourselves. Righteousness is not an outward imaginary quality, but an inward and real disposition of the heart and soul, which must shew forth itself in real and substantial acts of Holiness and Piety. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness, is righteous,* 1 John iii. 7. And St. James, ch. i. 27. *Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* Let no man therefore deceive himself with vain imaginations, in hopes of being accounted righteous any other way, than by that which God has proposed to us in his holy Scriptures: Let us consider how great things Christ has done in order to our Salvation; and let us shew forth our thankfulness for what *he* has done for us, by heartily setting about what he has absolutely required that we should do for *ourselves*: Let us sincerely endeavour to obey the will of God as discovered to us, in the Gospel; and then we may firmly hope for (and shall certainly obtain) remission, not through the merits of that our Righteousness which is imperfect, but through the redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ, wherein we are by that sincere, though imperfect Righteousness, made capable of having a share.

S E R.

---

## S E R M O N IV.

How CHRIST has given us the Victory over Death.

[*Preached on Easter Day.*]

---

I COR. XV. 56, 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

S E R M.  
IV.

**I** Proceed now to the third and last Thing I proposed, which was to show how Christ gives us the Victory over Death, which is the last Enemy to be destroyed, 1 Cor. xv. 26. Death is either natural and temporal, which is the Death of the body; or eternal, which is the Death and the Destruction of the Soul. In the Old Testament, Death generally signifies that temporal Death, which is the dissolution of the body; though when it is threatned as the punishment of Sin, it præfigures and includes in it eternal Death. Which is also sometimes expressly threatned even



even in the *Old Testament*; thus Ezek. xviii. 26. S E R M.

*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquities, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die;* IV.

the manner of expression is very observable: If he repent not of his iniquity but *dieth* in it, *then* for the iniquity that he hath done shall he die. In the *New Testament*, Death when 'tis threatned to Sinners, signifies almost always *eternal* Death; the Gospel containing, as a more clear discovery of life and immortality, so also a more express revelation of the wrath of God from Heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Now over *both* these kinds of Death, Death temporal and eternal, Christ gives us the victory, or delivers us from the power of them: The power of *temporal* Death is universal, as the punishment threatned to *Adam's* transgression was extensive; and the deliverance from it shall be also universal; *For as in Adam all die*, all are become subject to mortality; *even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, 1 Cor. xv. 22. *Eternal* Death is the punishment of unrepented Sin, and from This all those who repent and obey the Gospel, shall be delivered by Christ.

I SHALL consider *first* the victory that Christ gives us over *temporal* Death; and for the clearer explaining the nature of this Victory, shall endeavour to shew *first*, That there shall be a resurrection

S E R M, rection of the body, and 2dly, in what manner  
IV. the body shall be raised.

1<sup>st</sup>, T H A T there shall be a resurrection of the body. That the soul should survive the dissolution of the body, and be capable of receiving in a future State the rewards or punishments due to the good or evil it had done in *this* life, was clearly enough deducible from the light of nature, and proved by undeniable reasonings: But that the body should be again formed out of the dust, and reunited to the Soul, from which it was separated by Death, was a Doctrine, which as it could not be proved merely by reason and argument, so the Philosophers, who pretended to be the great masters of reason, looked upon it as the most impossible thing in nature. Some of them reckoned it among those things which they thought were not in the power even of their Gods themselves to effect: and we read of certain Philosophers, *Acts* xvii. 18. who encountered St. Paul, and when they heard of the resurrection, they mocked him, saying, *that he seemed to be a setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the Resurrection.* Yet is there nothing in any wise impossible, or contrary to reason, in this great Mystery: *For why should it be thought a thing impossible that God should raise the dead?* Why should it be more impossible for God to gather together the dispersed parts of a corrupted body, and reunite them to their former Soul, than to create matter at first out of nothing and

and then form it into a human body, *and breathe*  
*into it the breath of life?* Why should any man  
be so weak as to imagine, that he, who at the  
creation separated the confused mass of matter  
into so many different sorts of bodies, cannot  
with the same ease at the general Resurrection se-  
parate again the same confused matter, and assign  
to each particular body its own parts? If it is  
not difficult for him *to number the Stars of Heaven*  
*and call them all by their names*; it can be no dif-  
ficulty to him to keep an exact account of all our  
scattered parts; and to recollect and reunite them  
when he pleases. 'Twas not therefore because  
the thing is in itself at all impossible, but only  
because the manner of it is a mystery not disco-  
verable barely by the light of nature, that the  
Heathen World, was utterly ignorant of the Re-  
surrection from the dead. The proof therefore  
of this great truth must be founded in Revela-  
tion, and sought for only in the Holy Scriptures.  
And here it must be confessed, that the *Jews* had  
not a clear and express revelation of this matter:  
Yet were they by no means *wholly* ignorant of it;  
there being several passages in the Old Testament,  
from whence the hope of a Resurrection might  
very reasonably be collected. The translation of  
*Enoch* and *Elijah* into Heaven with their Bodies,  
was an earnest of what might finally be expected,  
by those who should follow their example in  
pleasing God; and the strict command that *Jacob*  
and *Joseph* gave, not to be buried in *Egypt*, but  
to



S E R M. to have *their bones carried up into the land of Canaan*  
 IV. *and laid in the Sepulchres of their Fathers*; was to  
 many of the antient Jews an argument or type of  
 their hope of a Resurrection. That the thing  
 was not in itself impossible, the instances of such  
 as were actually raised from the dead by the Pro-  
 phets, was a signal proof. And *Isaiab* xxvi.  
 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my*  
*dead body shall they arise: Awake and sing, ye that*  
*dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs,*  
*and the earth shall cast out the dead.* And the  
 vision of *Ezekiel*, set down in the xxxvii<sup>th</sup> Chapter  
 of his Prophecy, tho' it signified indeed prima-  
 rily the Restauration of *Israel* to their own land,  
 yet in all probability, considering the peculiar  
 Emphasis and particularity of the description, it  
 was intended remotely to point at a greater and  
 more general Restauration; *Behold a valley full*  
*of dry bones, and there was a noise, and behold a*  
*shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his*  
*bone, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them,*  
*and the skin covered them above, and their breath*  
*came into them, and they lived and stood upon their*  
*feet, and behold a great multitude.* But that pas-  
 sage in the Prophet *Daniel*, tho' by some it be,  
 with great violence to the Words, otherwise in-  
 terpreted; is most exprefs, and by the antient Jews  
 understood of the Resurrection; *Dan. xii. 2, and*  
*3. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the*  
*earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some*  
*to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that*

be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever, and thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days, Dan. xii. 13.

SERMON.  
IV.

Lastly, that solemn Prophecy of Job, ch. xix. ver. 23. *Oh that my Words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:* These words, I say, tho' by many of the antient Jews they were interpreted concerning a future State without respect in particular to the Resurrection of the body, and by some later Interpreters are understood only of his restitution to his temporal greatness; yet because of their being introduced with so very solemn and weighty a preface, as containing somewhat of the highest moment and importance; they are by others not without great reason thought to be spoken concerning the Resurrection of the body. And that the Jews did believe, that the bodies, at least of such remarkably pious men, should rise again, appears plainly from the translation of the last Verse of the book of Job according to the Seventy, which in their Version runs thus; *So Job died, being old and full of days; But 'tis written that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up.* The Jews therefore had at last an obscure and indeterminate

SERMON. terminate expectation of the Resurrection of the  
 IV. body; Nay, the later Jews more certain: For  
 so one of the seven Brethren, 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11.  
 when his hands were to be cut off; *These*, says he,  
*I had from Heaven, and for his laws I despise them,*  
*and from him I hope to receive them again! For the*  
*King of the World shall raise us up, who have died*  
*for his Laws, to everlasting Life.* But now in the  
 New Testament this Doctrine is so clearly revealed,  
 that it may justly be wondered how it was pos-  
 sible for any one that believed the Gospel at all,  
 to doubt of the certainty of it. Yet we read  
 that there were, even so very early as in the days  
 of the Apostles themselves, *who concerning this*  
*truth, did err, saying that the resurrection is past*  
*already, and overthrow the faith of some,* 2 Tim.  
 iii. 18. But as their opinion was so absurd as to  
 need no confutation, so in a little time it entirely  
 vanished of itself. I shall not therefore insist on  
 any other argument for the proof of this doctrine,  
 then that which the Apostle makes use of in this  
 Chapter; which is the Resurrection of Christ:  
*For*, saith he, *if there be no resurrection of the*  
*dead, then is Christ not risen; And if Christ be*  
*not risen, then is our preaching vain; and your*  
*Faith also is vain; But now Christ is risen from*  
*the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that*  
*slept,* ver. 13, 14. The force of which argument  
 is plainly this: If there be no resurrection of  
 the dead, then is that doctrine, which the  
 Apostles preached concerning it, erroneous and  
 false;



false; and if that doctrine be false, then the resurrection of Christ, which is the proof of that doctrine, must likewise be false: If therefore the resurrection of Christ be true, as he had before proved *by a cloud of Witnesses* at the beginning of the Chapter, then the Apostles doctrine, of which that his resurrection was the evidence, must also be true; and if the Apostles preaching, and the promises of God made known by the Gospel, be true, then *shall the dead certainly rise again.* That is: As certain as the resurrection of Christ is true, as certain as the Christian Religion is a revelation credibly attested to be from God; so certain is it, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead: *If Christ, who is our Head, be risen; then shall we also rise with him unto glory. I am the resurrection and the life,* saith our Blessed Saviour, John xi. 25; and *this is the Will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting Life, and I will raise him up at the last day,* John vi. 40; which last words, that there might be no room for doubt concerning them, are repeated no less than four times in that Chapter. Now that this promise shall certainly be fulfilled, God hath given us assurance by raising up him beforehand to be the *first-fruits from the dead:* He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead, Acts

SER. M. xvii. 31. The Resurrection of Christ is such an

IV. earnest and pledge of our resurrection, as not only demonstrates the *possibility* of the thing, but gives assurance also of the *certainty* of it: For, that the same power that raised up him, *can* also raise up us, is evident; and that it *will* do so, we are assured by *his* promise, who raised up Christ to that very end, that he might give us assurance, that he would also *raise up us*. But here some Men will say, *How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?* Which is the

2d Thing I proposed to speak to, namely, the *manner how the dead shall be raised*; and to this question we may answer, in the Words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 36. *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, suppose of wheat or of some other grain; But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.* From which similitude of the Apostle, we may safely collect these two things; 1st, That in the whole, the same body which died, shall be raised again; 2dly, That yet it shall rise with very great alterations. That in the whole, the same body which died, shall be raised again, appears in general from the Apostle's using the similitude of Corn: For as Corn groweth not indifferently out of any ground, but there must be seed sown out of which it may spring, and therefore every sort of grain pro-  
duceth

*duceth Corn of its own likeness and peculiar form; S E R M.*

IV.

So at the resurrection, the bodies of them that arise, shall not be formed indifferently out of any matter, but the bodies that die, those mortal and corruptible bodies, shall be in a figurative sense as it were the seed and material principle of those immortal and incorruptible ones, into which we shall then be quickened. Indeed whether in equity, and in order to a just retribution, it be necessary absolutely in the nature of the thing, that the same Body should be raised again, we cannot certainly tell; because we know not distinctly how far the same body is necessary to constitute the same person. But though it cannot be proved that God is absolutely bound in justice to unite the Soul to the same body from which it was separated by death, yet that in fact he *will* do so, the expressions of Scripture concerning this matter do sufficiently intimate: When the Apostle assures us, *that the body shall rise again, and that He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies*, he does not say only that the Soul shall be again united to matter, but also that the *body* which died shall be quickened or made to live again; *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and This mortal must put on immortality*; which is not saying only that the Soul, which was before united to a *mortal and corruptible body*, shall at the resurrection be clothed with an *immortal and incorruptible one*; but that *This same Body*, which is now mortal and



S E R M. corruptible, shall then put on immortality and  
 IV. corruption. To which purpose 'tis affirmed in  
 Scripture, *that the sea shall give up the dead that  
 are in it, and death and the grave shall deliver up  
 the dead that are in them, and they that sleep in the  
 dust of the earth shall hear the voice of Christ and  
 rise: And indeed, having one example of it in  
 the resurrection of Christ, and knowing that in  
 all cases 'tis as easy for God to raise the same body  
 as to frame a new one, no reason can be ima-  
 gined why it should not be so. But 'tis true,  
 the parts of one body may possibly be so scattered  
 and perhaps incorporated among the parts of  
 another body, that it shall not be possible for  
 every particular body to arise with just the same  
 parts, of which it consisted at the time of its  
 dissolution: Neither is there any necessity at all  
 either in nature or Scripture that it should do so.  
 How far therefore each body shall consist exactly  
 of the same matter, or what change of parts  
 may be admitted, is a vain, empty, and needless  
 speculation; a nicety, which as it is not possible for  
 us to determine, so neither is it necessary for us to  
 know: Sufficient it is to all wise and good pur-  
 poses, that we believe and affirm with St. Paul,  
*that as out of a grain of corn sown in the earth  
 there springs an ear of the same kind; so from a  
 mortal and corruptible body buried in the ground,  
 there shall be raised an immortal and incorruptible  
 one.* For 2dly Though in the whole the same body  
 that died shall be raised again, yet shall it rise  
 with*

with very great alterations: *As thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, suppose of wheat or of some other grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; so also is the resurrection of the dead.* What these alterations shall be, the Apostle tells us in the 42, 43 and 44 Verses of this xv<sup>th</sup> Chapter of 1 Cor. *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* 1st, *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; i. e.* The body which has now in it such manifest principles of mortality and corruption; which consists now of such brittle and tender parts, that every the least violence disturbs and unfits them for their operations; which is now subject to so many casualties, and has its continuance depending upon the fit disposition of so many little and easily disordered parts, that 'tis a greater wonder how we continue to live a day than why we die after so few years space; *this body shall at the resurrection be perfectly refined and purged from all the seeds of mortality and corruption; shall be made up of such parts and so constituted, as shall neither in themselves have any tendency to dissolution, nor be capable of being any way, disordered and unfitted for their proper functions; in a word, shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal substance, which shall be fitted to endure as long as the Soul to which it is to be united, even to all eternity.*

SERMON. Again, *it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;*

IV.

*That body, which at death seems so base and abject, so vile and contemptible, shall at the resurrection be transformed into a bright and beautiful and glorious body. Neither ought it at all to seem strange to us, that it should be capable of receiving so great a change; for if even in this mortal life the motions of the Soul, joy and hope, innocence and an assurance of the favour of God, can shew forth themselves with so remarkable a Vigour, and as it were with a lustre, in the countenances of men; if St. Stephen's innocence and joyful assurance, could make his face to appear as it had been the face of an Angel; and Moses's conversing with God upon the Mount, could make his face so shine, that the Children of Israel were not able to look upon him for the brightness and glory of it; how much greater change must the strong and powerful operations of a glorified Soul, ravished with the beatifick vision of God, make in a subtle immortal and incorruptible body? But besides this, we are moreover assured, that our Saviour shall also by his immediate power, even by that mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, change this our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. And what sort of body his glorious body is, may in some measure be gathered from the History of his transfiguration, where his face is described to have shined like the Sun, and his raiment to have become shining,*



*shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white them, St. Matth. xvii. 2. compared with Mark ix. 3. and from the description of his appearance to St. John, Rev. i. 14. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* Such therefore shall be the glorified bodies of the Saints at the resurrection; namely, made like unto the glorified body of Christ. And this perhaps is what is intimated by our Saviour in that promise, St. Matth. xiii. 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father;* and in that Prophecy of Daniel, ch. xii. ver. 3. *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever;* and by the Author of the Book of Wisdom, ch. iii. 6, 7. *As gold in the furnace has he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering: They shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble: They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people; and the Lord shall reign for ever.* Further, *It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;* i. e. That body, which is now so weak and feeble, so subject to diseases and indispositions, so slow, heavy and unactive, that it clogs the soul and retards its spiritual flights and operations; shall then become so strong and powerful, so active and vigorous, as even to be assisting to the most spiritual motions of the soul,

SER. M. to become every way a fit Organ and Instrument

IV. of its most exalted operations, and shall continue in that perfect health, strength, and vigour for ever: *For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away,* Rev. xxi. 4. Lastly, *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; i. e.* That body, which is now fitted only for this animal life; which consists of such gross substance, and that in continual change, as needs perpetually to be repaired with the suitable nourishment of meats and drinks, to be sustained and kept in order with labour and exercise, and to be refreshed with such pleasures as are suitable indeed to this animal life, but are far beneath the excellent nature of the soul, and prove oft-times hurtful and injurious to it; *This body*, I say, shall at the resurrection become of a more refined and spiritual nature, shall be wholly delivered from all those wants and incumbrances which are now so necessary to the preservation of the animal life; and shall be entirely freed from all appetites to such pleasures, as are now the *snare*s and temptations of the soul. All which, our Saviour seems plainly to intimate, in that answer of his to a captious question proposed by the *Saducees*, St Luke xx. 35. *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain That world and the resurrection from the dead, nei-*  
ther

*ther marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more, for they are equal or like unto the Angels.* Having thus explained the nature of the victory that Christ gives as over temporal death,

S E R M.

IV.

2dly, I proceed now in the *second* place to consider the Victory which Christ shall give to all his faithful Servants over that death which is *eternal*: And of this, very briefly. The Victory over temporal death shall be in some measure (as has been already observed) universal; For all shall rise again from the dead, and all, both just and unjust, shall be clothed with immortal and incorruptible *bodies*, which shall never be dissolved any more: But though there shall be no more dissolution of the body, nor separation of the soul, yet is there a greater destruction into which they who *believe not God and obey not his Gospel* shall at last fall; and that is the second death; Rev. xxi.

8. *The fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Now from this death, those, and those only shall be delivered by Christ, *who hear the Word of God and keep it; who bearken unto the commands of God, and in their lives obey them; They that overcome, shall not be hurt of the second death, for on them the second death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him for ever,* Rev. ii. 11. compared



SERMON. *pared with Ch. xx. ver. 6. And of this we must*

IV. *understand that promise of our Saviour, St John xi.*

*26. whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die, or (as the words may more properly be rendered) shall not die for ever, i. e. shall never fall into eternal death. That which Christ hath already done towards delivering his Servants from the power of this death, is his making provision for their deliverance from the dominion and from the guilt of Sin, of which this death is the consequence and punishment. That which still remains, and which he will yet do for them, is to acquit them publickly at the great day of judgment, and then in pursuance of that sentence of absolution, actually to instate them in his Kingdom of Glory. The resurrection of the dead is only in order to that final judgment which shall pass upon all mankind; for God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, even our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose appearance all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and live, and stand before his judgment-seat, and he shall judge them according to their works: The solemnity of which great day, cannot be more lively expressed than in those prophetick words of Daniel, Chap. vii. ver. 9. I beheld till the thrones were cast down and the antient of days did sit, whose garment was white as the snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; A fiery stream issued and*  
came

*came forth from before him, thousand thousands mi-* SERM.  
*nistred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thou-* IV.  
*sand stood before him; the judgment was set, and*

*the books were opened:* From which place most of the expressions which are made use of in the New Testament to signify the Second coming of Christ, are plainly borrowed. At this great Solemnity, all those who have embraced the gracious terms of the Gospel, and through the mercy of God have by Repentance and Obedience delivered themselves from the Power and Dominion of Sin, shall by their Saviour and Judge be publicly acquitted before Men and Angels, and pronounced free from the Guilt and from the Punishment of Sin. *For whosoever shall confess me before men, saith our Saviour, i. e. whosoever shall not be ashamed of the Religion of Christ, but notwithstanding all the Discouragements he may meet with in the World, shall persist in it and obey it, him shall the Son of man confess before his Father which is in Heaven, and before the angels of God, i. e. he shall acknowledge him for his true and faithful Disciple, and shall pronounce that blessed Sentence upon him, Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* The Servants of Christ being thus publicly acquitted at the general Judgment, shall in pursuance of this Sentence enter with him into Heaven, and be actually instated in his Kingdom of *Glory*; and so shall they ever be with the Lord. *This is the consummation of the Gospel-œconomy,*

S E R M. my, and the accomplishment of the Kingdom of  
 IV. Christ: Thus Christ, having totally subdued all  
 his Enemies, shall for ever be glorified with his  
 saints; and they shall be before the throne of God,  
 and shall serve him day and night in his temple; and  
 he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them:  
 they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more,  
 neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat: for  
 the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall  
 feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains  
 of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from  
 their eyes; and they shall for ever sing that joyful  
 song of praise, Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us  
 and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and  
 hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father,  
 to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.  
 Amen.

HAVING thus at large explained how Christ  
 gives his Servants the Victory over their last ene-  
 my, which is Death, I shall only draw an infe-  
 rence or two, from what has been said, and so  
 conclude. And 1<sup>st</sup>, If these things be so, then  
 let us, as the Apostle infers in the words imme-  
 diately following the Text, *be stedfast, unmove-  
 able, always abounding in the work of the Lord,*  
*forasmuch as we know that our labour shall not be*  
*in vain in the Lord.* Our Saviour has assured us,  
 that if we be stedfast in our Religion, and per-  
 severe in our Obedience to it, nothing shall by  
 any means hurt us, but we shall be more than con-  
 querors over all our enemies, even over Death itself.

I am



*I am, saith he, the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,* SERM. IV.

John xi. 25. Now what greater encouragement can any man desire than to be assured that his labour shall not only not be in vain, but that it shall also meet with a great and inexpressible reward? And what greater reward can possibly be proposed, than deliverance from death and an entrance into life eternal? If then we in earnest believe these things, as by our Religion we profess and pretend to do, let us also consider them and urge them upon ourselves; let us by frequent meditation, convince ourselves of the truth and importance of them; and let us always so live, as being under the power of these convictions. Let not the terror of short and temporary evils drive us into Sin, who are convinced that the consequence of that sin will be misery and death eternal; and let not the allurements of short and transitory pleasures withdraw us from our duty, who are convinced that the performance of that duty will be life and happiness for ever. The religion of Christ requires nothing of us but what is extremely reasonable and manifestly for our advantage, namely, *to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*; yet does it promise to Obedience such an infinite reward, as life from the dead, even life eternal; and he that will not by such a motive be persuaded to be steadfast in such a Religion, must have lost all sense, I do not say only of virtue and goodness, but also of his own  
inter-

S E R M. interest and happiness. 2dly, If Christ has taken

IV.

away the *sing of death*, and gives us the victory over it; then good Christians ought not to be afraid and terrified at death, any more than at an enemy that is already conquered, and can do them no hurt. *Christ hath both died for us, and is risen again*; and one great reason why he did so, was to assure us, that as it was not possible for *him* to be holden of death, so neither should we be detained by it; for he took part of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, i. e. the Devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage, Heb. ii: 14, 15. Christ has made death to be nothing else but a passage unto life eternal, to all those who shall obey his commandments; Let us then sincerely endeavour to obey the commands of God, and death shall have no sting, nothing that is terrible in it. He that has either from the beginning, or after true Repentance, made it the principal business of his life, to live soberly, righteously, and godly; may without fear expect the approach of death, nay even with joy and comfort hope for it. And this the generality of mankind are so sensible of, that tho' they desire not to be like the Servants of God in their lives, yet they cannot but wish, with Balaam, to be like them in their deaths, Numb. xxiii. 10. *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.* 3dly, and lastly, If Christ will give all his Servants victory over death, then

we ought not to grieve immoderately at the death S E R M.  
of our friends who die in the Lord. *I would not* IV.

*have you ignorant, saith St Paul, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others that have no hope; For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him, 1 Theff. iv. 13. If we believe that there shall be a resurrection from the dead, we ought not to sorrow immoderately for the departure of those, who have left this wicked and miserable world, and are gone to rest from their labours? For so saith the Spirit of God, Rev. xiv. 13. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

S E R -



## S E R M O N V.

The Inexcusableness of rejecting the Gospel.

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]

H E B. ii. 3, 4.

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will?*

S E R M. V. **T**H E S E words contain an account, how utterly inexcusable all men are, who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel; either by rejecting it through Unbelief, when offered unto them; or by living unworthily of it, after they have pretended to embrace it. Many considerations there are, which highly aggravate

vate the fault of such persons as contemptuously neglect the proposal of a favour, which 'tis both their duty and their greatest interest to accept; and many circumstances make them more and more inexcusable, and justly to deserve the severest punishment, for their ingratitude and contempt. The intrinsic *Goodness* and *Excellency* of the *Thing itself*, which they despise and neglect; the great *Value*, the *Necessity*, and singular *Importance* of it; the exceeding great *Benefit*, which, by being duly received, it would bring along with it; and the extreme *Evils* which are consequent upon the neglect of it: The *Power* and *Authority*, the *Greatness* and *Goodness* of the Person, whose favour we make light of; our Subjection to him and Dependance upon him, as our absolute *Governor*; or our Obligations to him, as our greatest *Benefactor*: The Dignity and Excellency of the *Person*, by whose *Interposition* the Benefit is procured, and by whom it is conveyed or sent to us: The great *Difficulties* that were necessary to be undergone in order to obtain it, or the great *Cost* that was requisite to purchase it: The Strength and Clearness of the *Evidence*, and the Number and Greatness of the *Proofs*, made use of to assure us of the *Certainty* of it: All these are Circumstances which greatly increase our Obligation, to accept with thankfulness the Advantage proposed, to make that due Use of it for which it was conferred, and be influenced by it in all the Actions of our Lives. And if we ne-

S E R M. neglect or despise it, or behave ourselves ill and unworthily under it; all the same circumstances do highly aggravate our guilt, render us very inexcusable, and make us justly to deserve the severest of punishments for our ingratitude and contempt. To reject That, which in the nature of the *thing itself*, is of the highest *Excellency and intrinsic Goodness*, is a mark of the greatest Depravity and Corruption of Manners. To despise That, which is of the last and utmost *importance* to us; on the due receiving, or on the neglecting whereof, depends the greatest Happiness or the extremest Misery our Nature is capable of; is the greatest Folly and Stupidity imaginable. To disobey the Commands of our supreme *Governor*, whose Power is absolute, and his Authority uncontrollable; is the highest Insolence; and to oppose the Will of our greatest *Benefactor*, is the basest Ingratitude: To slight and reject a gracious proposal of Mercy, procured for us by the interposition, and conveyed to us by the hands, of a Person of the greatest Dignity and Excellency; and who was likewise in order thereunto, necessarily to condescend and submit to undergo great Sufferings and Indignities; is the highest degree of *Perverseness* possible. And to withstand and not be convinced by such Proofs, as both in Number, Strength, and Clearness, are the best and greatest Evidence that can be expected or in reason desired; is the utmost Obstinacy, and most inexcusable wilful Opposition to Truth. Now all these



these aggravating Circumstances attend the re- S E R M.  
jecting, or (which is the very same thing) the dis- V.

obeying the Gospel; and they are most of them contained in these words of the Apostle; *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will?* In the words,

1<sup>st</sup>, HERE is the intrinsic Goodness and Excellency of the Thing itself, which wicked men reject; intimated as a just ground why they should not escape unpunished. It is in itself or in its own Nature a *great Salvation*; a Salvation from Sin and Misery, from the Power and Tyranny of the Devil, and from the punishment of Death.

2<sup>dly</sup>, HERE is a great Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting the Gospel; in that it is a Salvation not only *great in itself*, but also offered unto us by express revelation from *God himself*.

3<sup>dly</sup>, HERE is the Dignity and Excellency of the Person, *by* and *through* whom this Salvation is proposed to us; mentioned as a farther Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. It was *at the first begun to be spoken by the Lord*.

4<sup>thly</sup> and *Lastly*, THE Strength and Clearness of the Evidence, and the Number and Greatness of the Proofs, made use of to assure us of the Truth and Certainty of the Gospel; is of all others

S E R M. the *biggest* Aggravation, of the Guilt of those  
 V. who neglect or disobey it; and that which of all  
 other circumstances renders them the most utterly  
 inexcusable: *God also bearing them witness, both  
 with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles  
 and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own  
 will.* The principal and most remarkable of all  
 which Signs and Wonders, being that plentiful  
 Effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles,  
 which we *this day* commemorate; I shall there-  
 fore be very brief upon all the former Heads.

1<sup>st</sup>, HERE is the *intrinsic Goodness and Excel-  
 lency of the Thing itself*, which wicked men reject;  
 intimated as a just ground why they should not  
 escape unpunished. It is *in itself*, a *great Salva-  
 tion*; a Salvation from Sin and Misery, from the  
 Power and Tyranny of the Devil, and from the  
 punishment of Death. Sin, in its own Nature,  
 even separate from the consideration of its being  
 an obstinate disobeying the revealed Will of God,  
 is in itself utterly unreasonable and inexcusable:  
 'Tis acting in opposition to the known reason and  
 proportion of things; contrary to that eternal  
 Order and Equity, which God has established in  
 the original constitution of Nature; opposite to  
 the Light of Reason, the dictates of Conscience,  
 the unprejudiced Judgment of our own Minds,  
 the agreeing Opinion of all wise and good men,  
 nay and even of bad men themselves too; con-  
 trary to all our natural Notions and Apprehen-  
 sions, of the Attributes and Will of God; de-

destructive to the publick Welfare and Happiness S E R M.  
of Mankind, the Health of our own Bodies, the V.  
Peace of our Minds, and the Support of our  
good Name and Reputation amongst wise and  
reasonable men: 'Tis a subjecting our reason to  
vile affections, to inordinate and brutish appet-  
ites, to disorderly and ungoverned passions;  
Which is the greatest and the worst slavery in the  
world; to see and approve what is good, and yet  
not be able to prevail with ourselves to practise  
it; To be sensible of the destructive consequences  
of Sin, and yet, through the Strength of evil  
Habits, continue under the power and dominion  
of it; To feel ourselves deprived of our present  
Happiness, and of our best hopes of all that is to  
come; and yet continue in the practice of such  
Vices, as are the only Causes of all this Misery:  
This is evidently the greatest Misery, and most  
slavish Bondage that can be. Now to have a  
way proposed to us, of being delivered from  
this Body of Sin, into the glorious Liberty of  
the Children of God; to have a method laid  
before us, of being rescued from this Misery,  
and put into a way of securing both our present  
Happiness and that which is to come: This is  
the Offer of a *great Salvation*; This whoever shall  
neglect, is absolutely inexcusable, and justly de-  
serves to fall into that Misery, from which he  
would not accept a deliverance. The Light of  
Nature itself directs us thus far, and that which  
all true Philosophy pretended to, was to con-



S E R M. vince men of the reasonableness and necessity of  
 V. *endeavouring*, by all the helps of Reason and natural Religion, to deliver themselves from this bondage and slavery of Sin. The Gospel proposes to us an infinitely more effectual way of obtaining this end, than any Philosophy under the Light of Nature was ever able to do; showing us most clearly the heinous Nature of Sin, and the dreadful Consequences of it; all the Obligations of our Duty in a more clear and particular manner, and the infinite Advantage of complying with them; the true expiation of Sin, and the certainty of our Repentance being acceptable in the sight of God, and effectual to obtain Pardon; and affording us sufficient Helps and Assistances, to enable us to perform what it requires of us, in order to our future and eternal Happiness. This is, in the Nature of the Thing itself, a *great Salvation*; and the neglecting of which, (even separate from the Consideration of the particular Dishonour done to God by rejecting an immediate Revelation of his Will,) is intrinsically in itself a most inexcusable Neglect, and justly deserving the severest of Punishments.

BUT then 2<sup>dly</sup>, This further Consideration, that the Gospel is an *express and positive revelation of the Will of God*, is a very high Aggravation of the Sin of neglecting *so great a Salvation*. He that desires not to be delivered from the *Dominion* of Sin, and has no thirst after a Life of *Righteousness*; for *That very reason* deserves not

to be saved from the punishment of Sin, and is S E R M.  
in his Nature unqualified for the Rewards of V.  
Holiness. But when to this choice of Wicked-  
ness there is added moreover a direct Contempt  
of God; when God has declared to men his Will  
by an immediate Revelation, and confirmed the  
Obligations of nature by his positive Command;  
when he has offered us Pardon upon our sincere  
Repentance, and vouchsafed us the Assistance of  
his Spirit to enable us to perform it, and pro-  
mised us eternal Life upon our performance of it,  
and has obliged us to accept this Salvation under  
pain of the severest penalties; the wrath of God  
being now most expressly revealed from Heaven  
against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of  
men; After *all* this, to continue still to despise so  
great Salvation, is adding Rebellion to our Sin,  
and with a high hand exalting ourselves against  
God; 'tis an avowed despising and contemning  
his Authority, and expressly declaring that we  
*will not have Him to reign over us.* If therefore  
Sinning barely against the *Law of Nature*, was  
sufficient to consign men to unavoidable Destruction;  
how shall *We* escape, if we continue to Sin  
both against Nature and Revelation? If the Ser-  
vant that *knew not* his Lord's Will, was yet to  
be beaten with stripes, because he did things in  
themselves worthy of stripes; how much more  
severely must They expect to be punished, who  
do the same things in direct opposition to the ex-  
press Will and known Command of their Master?

S E R M. This was the Reason why God punished the Sins  
 V. of his own people the *Jews*, with greater Severity than those of the Heathen: And so *Now* in like manner, whereas *the times of ignorance God winked at*, as the Apostle expresses it, *Acts xvii. 30.* that is, he was less strict and severe with men before the Revelation of the Gospel; *Now*, on the contrary, under pain of his severest displeasure, he peremptorily commands all men every where to repent; There being no excuse left, nothing that can alleviate their condemnation, if men, *after* that the clearest Light is come into the World, will still obstinately continue in their works of Darkness.

3dly, THE Dignity and Excellency of the Person, by and through whom this great Salvation is proposed to us, is a further Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. It was at first begun to be spoken by the Lord; that is, as the same Apostle expresses it in the foregoing chapter, *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* The Dignity of the Person, by whose interposition any Favour is procured, and by whom it is transmitted, shows both the Greatness and Importance of the Thing itself, and the Love and Condescension of the Original Author of it; and the neglecting it in this Case, implies not only Folly, Insolence, and Rebellion, but moreover, the greatest Obstinacy also, which no Authority can prevail over;



over; and the basest Ingratitude, which no Kind-  
ness or Condescension can overcome: Which

therefore whosoever is guilty of, must be confessed most justly to deserve the severest of Punishments. This (the Ingratitude of rejecting a Mercy, offered with so much Love and Condescension, by the hands of a Person of so great Dignity,) is what Our Saviour compelled the Jews to acknowledge, and made them condemn themselves for it with their own mouths, in the Parable of the Householder, St Matth. xxi. 33. *who having planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, first sent his servants to receive the fruits of it; and when the husbandmen had resisted and slain the servants, he afterwards sent his own Son to them, saying, Surely they will reverence my Son: But him also they resisted and slew: Whereupon when our Saviour appealed to the Pharisees themselves, to judge what it was fit for the Lord of the vineyard to do unto those husbandmen; They immediately replied, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons: Unwarily passing a just sentence against Themselves; that for rejecting the Gospel preached by Christ himself, they deserved a severer condemnation, than their Fathers who had before rejected the preaching and admonitions of the Prophets. The same Argument is used by the Apostle, in the words immediately preceding the Text; If the word, saith he, spoken*  
by

S E R M.  
V.  


**SERM.** by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;  
**V.** how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord? And ch. x. ver. 28. He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye shall be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God? And ch. xii. 25. See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh: For if They escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven.

ably and Lastly, THE Strength and Clearness of the Evidence, and the Number and Greatness of the Proofs, made use of to assure us of the Truth and Certainty of the Gospel; is the highest Aggravation of the guilt of those, who neglect or disobey it; and that which of all other things renders them the most absolutely inexcusable. The Gospel was at first begun to be spoken by the Lord, and was afterwards confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost; whereof that which we This day commemorate, was both the Foundation of all the rest; and in itself also of the greatest Efficacy and of the largest Extent.

THE stronger the Evidence of any Truth be, the more inexcusable is the making opposition

to it. And the highest Aggravation of this S E R M. crime, is, to continue to oppose a Truth, after V. the best and greatest Evidence has been given of it, that the Nature of the Thing was capable of. Opposition in this case, against the greatest Evidence that is reasonably to be expected, can proceed from nothing but either incurable Obstinacy and Perverseness; or a Love of some things, and a resolution not to part with them, the keeping of which is inconsistent with the acknowledgment of the Truth. And this is plainly the Case of those who reject the Gospel, after the undeniable Evidences that have been given of the Truth of it by the *Testimony of the Spirit*. Their rejecting it, cannot proceed from want of sufficient Conviction, but only from a love of Vice, and a resolution not to be reformed; which is a degree of incorrigibleness, in which there is no *hope* of excuse, and for which there remains no remedy; and which there is no hopes of amending. When clear Light is come into the World, and men still continue their works of Darkness; then it becomes evident that their wickedness proceeds not from Ignorance and want of Instruction, but from Will and Choice; they love Darkness rather than Light, and stand in open defiance to God and his supreme Authority. This is what our Saviour says of the Jews; *St John* xv. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloak for*



**S E R M.** for their Sin: If I had not done among them the  
**V.** works which no other man did, they had not had

*W* Sin; but now they have both seen and hated both  
 me and my Father. This is the reason of his de-  
 claring to the cities of Judæa, that it should be  
 more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day  
 of Judgment than for Them; because if the mighty  
 works that were done in Them, had been done in  
 Sodom, it would have repented in sackcloth and  
 ashes. This is the reason of his declaring to  
 those Pharisees, who blasphemed the Holy Spirit,  
 that they should never have forgiveness neither in  
 this World, nor in that which is to come; because  
 they resisted the last and greatest means, that  
 God would ever make use of to bring them to  
 repentance; and not resisted it only, but reviled  
 it also: They saw with their own eyes the  
 clearest and strongest proofs of the Truth of the  
 Gospel, that could possibly be given; and yet  
 they not only withstood the Evidence of those  
 mighty works, but also blasphemed the Holy  
 Spirit by which they were worked. Their  
 Crime was singular and unexampled, and their  
 Condemnation, was likewise singular. But all  
 others also, who reject the Gospel, are, in pro-  
 portion to the greatness of the Evidence they  
 resist, and according to the degree of their  
 Obstinacy and Wickedness in so doing, inex-  
 cusable in like manner, and Despisers of the  
 Testimony of the Spirit.

THE *Testimony* which the Spirit of God has S E R M.  
given to the Truth of the Gospel, contains a V.  
great variety of undeniable Proofs, which St   
*Paul* calls *the Power and Demonstration of the Spirit*. The many large and particular Prophecies, which from the beginning of the World were dictated by the *Spirit*, concerning the Person of our Saviour, and the Nature, Success, and Effects of his Doctrine: the Conception of our Lord by the Miraculous Operation of the *Spirit*, and the manifold Wonders which attended his Birth: The Visible Descent of the *Spirit* upon him at his Baptism, accompanied with a Voice from Heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God: The Miracles which he worked during the course of his Ministry, by the *Spirit of God*; as the Scripture frequently expresses it: His Resurrection from the Dead, which likewise the Scripture ascribes to the Power of the same Spirit, *Rom. viii. 11.* and *1 Pet. iii. 18.* But above all, that most plentiful Effusion of the *Spirit* upon the Apostles at *Pentecost*; whereby they were indued with Power from on high, to preach the Gospel with Authority and Efficacy; being enabled particularly to speak with tongues, and to do even greater Works than our Saviour himself had worked upon Earth, according to his Promise which he made to them before his departure; These *Testimonies* (I say) of the *Spirit of God*, contain such demonstrative Proof of the Truth of the Gospel, as leaves *Them* who reject it,

S E R M. it, capable of no excuse; since they despise the  
 V. *last and greatest means; that shall be, or indeed*  
*could be made use of for their conviction and*  
 reformation. This last Miracle in particular, the *Gift of Tongues* to the Apostles, was of all others the strangest, and in its nature and circumstances the greatest and most affecting that could be conceived. The Apostles, on whom this Gift was bestowed, were men whose Parentage and Education were well known to all that dwelt in *Jerusalem*; They were known to be illiterate and mean persons; persons whose Employment had been laborious, and their manner of life from the beginning, such as afforded them neither Time nor Opportunities, of being skilled in the Learning and Customs of their *own Country*, much less of having studied the languages of other Nations. Had they been men of a polite and learned education, brought up in the study of their own Law, and in the Schools of the Scribes and Pharisees; it might have been imagined that this their skill in foreign languages might be the Effect of Study, and Industry, of Art and Design, in order to gain Applause from the people, and set themselves up as Heads of new Sects, and Teachers of popular Doctrines. But so far from This was their case, that on the contrary they were despised and contemned by their own countrymen for that very reason, because being well acquainted with their Education and manner of Life,



Life, they did not think it possible that any Wisdom could be found in *Them*, or any Knowledge proceed from their lips. Exactly as they had formerly said of their Master, when he went up into the Temple and taught, St *John* vii. 14. *How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?* And St *Mark* vi. 2. *From whence has this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him? Is not this the carpenter the Son of Mary, the Brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?* Herein therefore consisted the Greatness of the Miracle, that men of no Education spake different languages *perfectly*; and that they did it *immediately and at once*, without any Time, Instruction, or Study. Neither was there any room for any Fallacy or Deceit in this matter: For this thing was not done in a Corner, but publickly in the midst of *Jerusalem*, and in the presence of innumerable witnesses; and that not *once* only, but with a continued and permanent Effect. The Witnesses also that were present, were the best and most competent Judges that could be; being persons of different Nations, gathered together at *Jerusalem* upon account of the Feast, to whom all the languages which the Apostles spoke, were severally natural; so that they could not be deceived, or imposed upon, in this whole proceeding. The Natives of *Jerusalem*, who understood not the tongues which were spoken, nor knew whether they

SER. M. they were really any languages at all; might  
 V. indeed mock, and say that *these men were full of  
 new wine*, Acts ii. 13. but the foreigners, who  
 heard each his own proper language, could not but  
 be justly filled with wonder and amazement. The  
 Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, were witnesses that the  
 Apostles were illiterate men, and understood no  
 language but their Mother-tongue, nor were ca-  
 pable of using any Art or Fraud in this matter,  
 and the *Strangers* were witnesses, that what they  
 uttered were true and real languages, and there-  
 fore could not be the effect of wine or madness.  
 The Testimony therefore of Both together, made  
 the miracle certain, unquestionable and manifest;  
 and accordingly the Effect of it, was propor-  
 tionably great. For so we read, *Acts ii. ver. 41.*  
*that the same day, there were converted about three*  
*thousand Souls.* This was the *immediate Effect*  
 of the gift of Tongues at that very Time; and  
 the *Usefulness* of it *afterwards*, was peculiar and  
 more remarkable, than of all other Miracles  
 whatsoever. For this enabled the Apostles to  
 preach the Gospel to all Nations, with such  
 speed and incredible success, that though men  
 of other Religions endeavoured to make Con-  
 verts as well as they, and some Sects of the *Jews*  
 particularly were infinitely industrious and would  
 compass Sea and Land to gain a Profelyte; yet  
 the Preaching of the Apostles, *like the day spring*  
*from on high, like the morning-light, which in a*  
*moment dispels the darkness from under one end of*  
 Heaven

*Heaven to the other*, propagated the Gospel in a S E R M. V. very few years to a vastly larger extent, than ever any other religion was propagated in the compass of many Ages. This Gift of Tongues ceased indeed after some time, as other Miracles did; because all these sort of gifts were bestowed not for their own sake or intrinsic worth, but only in order to the propagation of the Gospel, and to convince men of the Truth of that Religion, whose principal end and design consisted in those gifts and graces of the Spirit which were to continue for ever. Which end being once obtained, and the Gospel established in the World, these miraculous gifts ceased; having been given, as St Paul expresses it, *not for them that believe, but for them that believe not.* But those gifts of the Spirit, in which consists the renewal of the mind of man, and which are the Springs of all virtues which make us like unto God; these are to continue through all Ages; and are so much more excellent and more desirable than the former, as the End is better and more excellent than the Means. In our Saviour's and in the Apostles time, it was very natural to the Weakness of Men, to be most ambitious of such gifts, as made the greatest appearance, and could not but gain the greatest esteem and applause in the eyes of the World: but our Saviour himself cautioned his Disciples, *not to rejoice so much at their being indued with a power of work-*



SERMON *ing Miracles, as at their Names being written in*

V. *Heaven: And St. Paul afterwards took great*

*W* *pains to convince his hearers, that though it was indeed lawful to cover miraculous gifts, yet he could still shew unto them a more excellent way; that it was a greater and far more desirable thing, to instruct men in their plain and necessary duty, than to work the most stupendous miracle; and that Love and Goodness, Righteousness and Holiness, Meekness and Charity, were things more excellent and valuable in themselves, than to be able to speak with all the Tongues, either of Men or Angels. The reason is plain, because the one is beneficial only to Others, but the other to ourselves likewise; He that works a Miracle or speaks with Tongues to convince another, may yet possibly himself have no title to the rewards of the Gospel; but He that is indued with those gifts which are the end and design of the Gospel, and for the sake only of which all the rest were given, does thereby secure his own Salvation, as well as promote the Salvation of others. Let us then by Charity and Goodness and the practise of all virtues, secure to ourselves that which is most excellent; and then, though the gifts of Miracles be not continued to us, yet we shall obtain the End for which alone those gifts have ever been given to Others. For, he that speaks with Tongues for the conversion of others, may (without the Virtues of Meekness and Humility, Love and*

*VI Charity,)*

Charity,) himself possibly become a Cast-away: S E R M.  
But he whose Mind is indued with those inward V.  
Virtues, which are the *more* excellent gifts and  
fruits of the Spirit, has attained that *End*, for  
the promoting of which, the other *outwardly*  
*brighter* and more resplendent Gifts, were all  
intended but as *Means*.

Different Tempers Judge differently  
of Religion.

[Preached on Easter Day.]

1 Cor. i. 22. 23. 24.

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek  
after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified,  
unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the  
Gentiles foolishness: but unto them which are called,  
both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of  
God, and the Wisdom of God, which is secret,  
and which we have taught you by the Word,  
that ye might be saved.

S E R M.  
VI.

I shall explain distinctly the several Ex-  
positions contained in the Text, and shall  
I shall adduce some useful inferences therefrom.  
I. In order to explain distinctly the several  
Expositions made use of in the Text, it is to be  
observed, that the Text is therein contained  
in the following Words.  
U. T. That the Great and general Difference be-  
tween

H 2 S E R.

100

S E R M O N VI.

Different Tempers judge differently  
of Religion.

[*Preached on Easter Day.*]

1 COR. i. 22, 23, 24.

*For the Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.*

S E R M. VI. **I**N the following Discourse upon these Words, I shall 1<sup>st</sup> explain distinctly the several Expressions contained in the Text; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, I shall deduce some useful Inferences therefrom.

I. IN order to Explain distinctly the several Expressions made use of in the Text, 'tis to be observed that the Doctrine therein contained, consists plainly of the *three* following Heads. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Great and general Difference, be-



tween the Humours or Tempers of the Nation SERM.  
of the *Jews* on *one* hand, and the *Greeks* (who VI.  
were Then the principal and most polite part of  
the *beathen* World) on the *other* hand, was This;  
That the *Jews*, in *Their* examination into the  
Truth of any Doctrine proposed to them, were  
always apt to insist presently upon some *Miracle*,  
upon some *Token* to be shown them, in proof of  
the Doctrine's coming from *God*; Whereas the  
Temper of the *Gentiles* was, to expect conviction  
by *Disputation and Argument*, according to the  
*Philosophy* of the Times they lived in, which  
was esteemed the *Wisdom* of the Age then pre-  
sent: *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek*  
*after Wisdom.* 2dly, That Persons of *Both*  
these Tempers, and that pretended to make use  
of *Each* of these ways of judging, were generally  
extremely prejudiced against the Doctrine of the  
Gospel: Infomuch that the coming of Christ into  
the World, in the manner he did, in a mean,  
humble and lowly appearance, teaching a Doc-  
trine of Morality, Plainness, and Simplicity;  
was both a great Disappointment to the *Jews*,  
who expected one that should in a miraculous  
and pompous manner deliver them from their  
Enemies; and at the same time was no less dis-  
agreeable to the then prevailing fashion and me-  
thod of the *Gentiles*, who judged of Doctrines by  
the Eloquence, and Oratory, and Artfulness in  
Disputing, of Those who taught and maintained  
them: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a*

SER. M. stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.

VI. 3dly, That nevertheless, in Truth and Reality, setting aside Prejudices and Corrupt Notions, the Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with the *bighest and most complete Evidence*, according to *both* these *Methods* of judging: It was attended with the fullest Demonstrations of Divine Power, in the *Miracles* God worked by him; And it had all real marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect agreeableness to the Dictates of True and Impartial Reason: But unto them which are called, *both* Jews and Greeks, *Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.*

1st, THE Great and general Difference, between the Humours or Tempers of the Nation of the *Jews* on *one* hand, and the *Greeks* (who were Then the principal and most polite part of the *Heathen World*) on the *other* hand, the Apostle observes, was This; That the *Jews*, in *Their* examination into the Truth of any Doctrine proposed to them, were always apt to insist presently upon some *Miracle*, upon some *Token* to be shown them, in proof of the Doctrine's coming from God; Whereas the Temper of the *Gentiles* was, to expect conviction by *Disputation and Argument*, in Methods answering to the *Philosophy* of the Times they lived in, which was the Standard of *Wisdom* of the Age then present: *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.* As to the Temper of the *Greeks* in this matter; nothing is more notorious in History, than that,

about

about the Times of our Saviour and his Apostles, S E R M.  
the things principally esteemed among them VI.

were *Oratory* and the *Art of Disputing*: *Oratory*,  
by which Things were set forth in a beautiful  
Light, adorned with proper figures, made pleasing  
and acceptable to the Hearers by a Variety of  
agreeable expressions; And the *Art of Disputing*,  
by which every thing could be supported with  
*some* plausible *Arguments*, every thing could be  
opposed with *Some* seeming *Difficulties*, and every  
*Difficulty* could by men of Parts and Ingenuity  
have *Something* offered in *Reply* to it. These In-  
stances of Skill, in themselves, and when applied  
to good Purposes, where *Both of them* really use-  
ful and valuable. By *Oratory*, Truth and Right  
represented in a good View, and clothed in pro-  
per and agreeable expressions, appeared with a  
Greater Lustre, and made more Advantageous  
Impressions: And by *Skill in Arguing*, *Reason*  
was taught to exert itself in its full *Strength*, and  
*Truth* to shine forth in its peculiar and inimitable  
*Clearness*. But more frequently, among vicious  
and corrupt Men, these Instruments and Orna-  
ments of Reason were perverted to very wrong  
and contrary Purposes. By *Oratory*, the *Deformity*  
of *unrighteous Practices* was covered with  
the deceitful Appearance, and painted over with  
the beautiful Colours of *Just and Right*: And by  
*Skill in disputing*, the plainest *Truths* were perplexed  
with such *Intricacies*, and the grossest *Errors*  
concealed under such *Forms of Arguing*, as alto-



S E R M. gether confounded, to common Understandings,  
 VI. the Difference between Truth and Error. This  
 was what the corrupt part of the *Greeks* called  
*Wisdom*. As to the Temper of the *Jews*, They,  
 having received their Law by Revelation from  
 God, were never much accustomed either to Va-  
 lue in *themselves*, or to regard in *Others*, That  
 nice and abstract Reasoning, which was all that  
 the Gentile Philosophers had to depend upon;  
 The *Jews*, I say, never much attended to This  
 sort of Learning; But, whenever any Doctrine  
 was proposed to them which appeared to be New,  
 immediately they insisted, that the Author of it  
 should, by working some *Miracle*, give evidence  
 of his being sent from God. Thus *John* iv. 48.  
*Except ye see Signs and Wonders, ye will not believe:*  
 And *Matth.* xvi. 1. *The Pharisees desired him, that*  
*he would show them a Sign from Heaven.* Nor  
 were they to blame in so doing, when the Doc-  
 trine, to which their Assent was expected, was  
 proposed to them as of *Divine Revelation*; and  
 when their demanding such evidence, did not  
 proceed from any unreasonableness or perversene-  
 ness of Temper, but from a sincere Desire of  
 having such Satisfaction, without which a reason-  
 able Person could not justify his Assent from  
 being credulous and weak. But more frequently,  
 under pretence of expecting Further Satisfaction,  
 an obstinate and malicious Temper persisted con-  
 tinually in requiring more and more Signs, for  
 no other reason but because they resolved not to

*be convinced, being like the Deaf Adder which stop-* S E R M.  
*peth her ears, which refuseth to hear the Voice of* VI.  
*the Charmer, charm he never so wisely. Which* 

39. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth: The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because They repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas is here: The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the utmost parts of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here. The Meaning is: God had given them Signs abundantly sufficient, to convince any reasonable and unprejudiced persons; wherewith if they would not be satisfied, he would leave them to themselves. And This may suffice for explication of the first part of the Text, the General Observation concerning the different Temper or Humour of the Jewish and Gentile Nations: The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.*

2dly, THE Second Particular in the Text, is the Observation, that Persons of Both these Tempers, and that pretended to make use of Each of these

SER M. these ways of judging, were generally extremely  
 VI. prejudiced against the Doctrine of the Gospel:  
 W Infomuch that the coming of Christ into the  
 World, in the Manner he did, in a mean, humble, and lowly appearance, teaching a Doctrine of Morality, Plainness and Simplicity; was both a great Disappointment to the *Jews*, who expected one that should in a miraculous and pompous manner deliver them from their Enemies; and at the same time was no less disagreeable to the then prevailing Fashion and Method of the *Gentiles*, who judged of Doctrines by the Eloquence, and Oratory, and Artfulness in Disputing, of Those who taught and maintained them; *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.* The *Jews* thought that no other Sign was a Mark of the true Messias, but *Delivering them from their Temporal Enemies*; and that the Power of God could no otherwise be manifested in him, than by establishing him a *Kingdom in this World*. When therefore our Lord came in *Another* manner, preaching *humility and meekness, patience and charity*; calling them to *virtue and goodness*, instead of *Earthly Power and Dominion*: Though they were astonished at the Excellency of his Doctrine, and at the Greatness of his Works; and wondered *whence has This man this Wisdom, and those mighty works*; yet presently they say, *Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren, James and Joses and Simon and Judas*





and his Sisters, are they not all with us? whence then has this man all these things? and they were offended in him, Matth. xiii. 15. Nay, even his Own Disciples, whenever he began to speak to them of his Sufferings and Death, immediately they rebuked him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; This shall not be unto thee. And when he had actually suffered, they said with a desponding heart, We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel, Luke xxiv. 21. And even after they were satisfied of the Truth of his Resurrection, yet still their antient Prejudices put them upon seeking after the same Sign or Token as before; Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? Acts i. 6. So that, considering how great a Stumbling-block This Circumstance was to the whole Nation of the Jews, 'twas with very good reason that our Lord pronounces, Matth. xi. 6, Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me. As to the Gentiles; They, as I now observed, being used to judge of Doctrines by the Eloquence, and Oratory, and Artfulness in Disputing, of those who taught and maintained them; 'tis no wonder that the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel, which took no care to please and entertain them with artificial compositions, nor to try their Parts and gratify their Vanity with nice and subtle Disputations, but aimed wholly at reforming their Manners, and withdrawing them from idolatrous imaginations to the Service of the One Living and True God,

in

S E R M. in Holiness, Righteousness and Charity; 'tis no

IV.

wonder, I say, that this Plainness and Simplicity of Doctrine was offensive to *Them*, as it is *Now* to *All* sorts of men who place Religion in Forms and Ceremonies, and in certain Systems of Opinions of which they understand little; Nor ought it at all to seem strange, that the *Epicureans* and the *Stoics*, Acts xvii. 18. should encounter St Paul with that contemptuous question, *What will this Babler say?* This therefore is the *Second* Observation contained in the Text; that Persons of such different *Tempers*, and that made use of such different *ways of judging*, as the *Jews* and *Gentiles* did, were yet both of them under very great *Prejudices* against the Doctrine of the Gospel: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.*

3dly, THE *Third* and last Observation contained in the Text, is, that notwithstanding these pretended Objections, yet, in Truth and Reality, setting aside Prejudices and corrupt Notions, the Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with the *highest* and *most complete evidence*, according to *Both* the fore-mentioned *Methods* of judging: It was attended with the fullest Demonstrations of Divine Power, in the *Miracles* God worked by him; And it had all real Marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect agreeableness to the Dictates of true and impartial Reason: *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* As to the *Jews*;

(who

(who in judging of the Truth of any Doctrine, S E E M.  
 always insisted principally upon *Proofs* or *To- VI.*  
*kens* of the Teacher's *Authority*, upon *Signs* or  
*Evidences* of his being *sent from God*; To the  
*Jews*, I say, The numerous particular and di-  
 stinct *Prophecies* which were fulfilled in the Per-  
 son of our Saviour, and in Him Only; besides  
 all such as were typical, and had any Ambiguity  
 in them: And the *Miracles* which he worked  
 during the Course of his Ministry, nothing infe-  
 rior nor less conspicuous than those by which  
*Moses* of old proved the Truth of his Commis-  
 sion; These were *abundant Evidence*, in their Own  
 way; Evidence, to Them who *required a Sign*;  
 than which no greater Sign could possibly be gi-  
 ven, of the immediate interposition of the *Power*  
*of God*. For whereas our Lord's coming in a  
*mean Estate*, was so great a *Stumbling-block* to  
 them; and the principal *Sign* they expected; was  
 his setting up a *temporal Kingdom* with great *Pow-*  
*er and Glory*: This, in Truth and Reality, would  
 have been but a *small* manifestation of the Power of  
 God, in comparison of that which has and will be  
 shown forth by the *spiritual Kingdom* he has esta-  
 blished. For how *poorly* would the great Promises  
 of God made to *Abraham*, and the *Patriarchs*, and  
 to good men in all Ages; how *poorly*, and in how  
*low* a sense, would those Promises have been ful-  
 filled to *Them*, barely by giving their *Posterity*,  
 Many Ages after *Their* Decease, a *temporary King-*  
*dom*; in comparison of That glorious accom-  
 plish-



SERMON. plishment of them in Christ's *spiritual Kingdom*,  
 VI. wherein *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and all the  
 faithful Servants of God who have lived in all  
 Ages, shall *themselves literally and personally* inherit the Promises. Upon which account, the Apostle to the *Hebrews* elegantly observes, *Heb. xi. 16. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; For he hath prepared for Them*, (not for their Posterity only, when they themselves were to be no more; but) *for Them hath he prepared a City*. On the other hand, as to the *Gentiles*, who affected to depend entirely on *Reason and Arguments*; the Gospel, though it despised the Vanity of *Oratory*, and chose not to recommend itself in the Set Forms of artificial and perplexing *Disputation*; (for which cause it seemed *Foolishness* to conceited Philosophers;) yet in point of *True Reason, Wisdom and Godness*, it approved itself to be a Doctrine in all Respects excellent, and truly worthy of God: *Christ*, the *Wisdom*, as well as the *Power* of God. By the Gospel, all the great Truths of Natural Religion, discoverable by Reason and Argumentation; the Being and Attributes, the Government and Providence of God, the Unalterableness of Moral Obligation, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Expectation of future Rewards and Punishments; all these great Truths (I say) discoverable in good measure by Argumentation and Reason, were by the Gospel more plainly and expressly revealed, more distinctly and clearly explained, more strongly

and powerfully inforced. And the additional Revelation, of *Christ's* being appointed an *Intercessor* for penitent Sinners, and the *Judge* of the World; was an advantageous confirmation of all the same Truths, and a most wise and proper encouragement to the practice of *Virtue*. By This means, a well-attested interposition of *Divine Authority*, became unto All men a just ground of Assent to those Truths, which to make out by the Help of Reason only, was a work of Difficulty, Time, and Study. By this means, Instruction in matters of Religion became very short and easy, even to the meanest Capacities. And whereas the *Best and Greatest Philosophers* were in continual Disputes, and in many degrees of Uncertainty, concerning the very fundamental and most important Doctrines of Truth and Reason; Among those, on the contrary, who have embraced the Gospel of *Christ*, there never was the least room for Dispute about any *Fundamental*; All Christians, at all Times, and in all Places, having ever been baptized into the Profession of the same *Faith*, and into an Obligation to obey the same *Commandments*. And it being notorious, that all the Contentions that ever arose in the Christian World, have been merely about the several *Additions*, which every Sect or Party, in direct contradiction to the express Command of their Master, have endeavoured presumptuously to annex, by their *Own Authority*, to *His Doctrines*, and to *His Laws*.  
How

SER M. How much therefore, and how just ground for  
 VI. ever, has been given by those who call themselves  
*Christians*, to the Reproach of *Them which are without*; yet *Christ himself*, that is, the Gospel in its native Simplicity as delivered by *Him*, has abundantly, to all reasonable persons among the *Gentiles*, manifested itself to be the *Wisdom* of God; as well as it appeared to be the *Power* of God, in Signs and Wonders unto the *Jews*. Unto *them which are called*, both *Jews and Greeks*, *Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*.

II. THE Words and Doctrine of the Text being thus largely explained, it remains that I conclude with drawing two or three useful Inferences from what has been said.

AND 1<sup>st</sup>, From hence it appears, how foolish it is to endeavour, as some have done, to oppose *Reason* and *Revelation* to each other. For *both* of them, are the glorious Gifts of God; and *Each* of them establishes and confirms the Other. The quibbling indeed, and vain Methods of disputing, among the greater part of the Heathen Philosophers; were only *Shadows* of reasoning, falsely so called. But *True Reason*, is the great Glory of Human Nature: And upon Account of the *Gospel's* agreeableness to *This*, it is, that the Apostle in the Text gives it that high Character, of being the *Wisdom* as well as the *Power* of God. To imagine *Reason* and *Revelation* at variance with each other, is the like absurdity, as supposing the *Eye* to see contrary to what the



*Ear bears*, or that God should make *One Sense*, or Faculty, to contradict *another*. Vain men may poorly and weakly fancy, that they can sometimes promote *One Truth* at the Expence of *Another*: But the Works of God, are uniform and consistent, of a piece from one end to the other: And what our Saviour says concerning *Persons*, acting wisely and usefully in *different* ways; that *Wisdom is justified of All her Children*; may equally be applied to *Things* likewise, that *Wisdom is justified in all her Dispensations*.

2dly, If the *Power and Authority*, as well as the *Wisdom* of God; that is, if *Divine Revelation*, as well as *argumentative Proof*; be a just Ground of Assent, or Evidence of Truth: Then ought we always to take great heed, lest at any time we *weaken* the Strength of that Authority, by blending things of *Human* invention with those whose Institution is *Divine*. For whereas weak men think, by means of such confusion, to *strengthen* their *Own* Authority with the mixture of *Divine*; the real effect, on the contrary, always is, that the things of *Divine Authority* are insensibly *weakened*, by being made less distinguishable from what is merely *Human*.

3dly and lastly, FROM the manner in which *Christ* is here called *The Wisdom* and *The Power* of God, we may learn rightly to understand *Other* the like figurative expressions frequently found in Scripture. For as *Christ* is here styled the *Wisdom* of God, because his Gospel is agree-

S E R M. able to true *Reason*, and the *Power* of God, be-  
 VI. cause his Doctrine was confirmed by mighty  
 ~~~~~ *Works and Miracles*: So, in other places, he is  
 styled The *Word* of God, because he is the *Re-*
vealer of his Will to Men; and he is the *Way*, the
Door, the *Truth*, and the *Life*, because he has di-
 stinctly made known to us the Terms and Means
 of Salvation. And by the like figure of speech,
 the Sacramental Bread and Wine is styled the *Body*
 and *Blood of Christ*, because 'tis a solemn *commem-*
oration of his Death. And *Christians* are by the
 Apostle said to be the *Circumcision made without*
hands, because they *spiritually* are, what the *Jews*
 were *typically* by *Circumcision which was literal*.
 And *Praise* or *Thanksgiving* has the name of *Sa-*
crifice given to it, because 'tis a Signification of
 the same Temper and Disposition of Mind, which
 Sacrifices were intended to express, and which al-
 one made those Sacrifices acceptable before God.
 With many other the like Instances: In which,
 a careful consideration of the ground and reason
 of the Manner of Expression, may easily prevent
 great Misunderstandings of many Passages in
 Scripture.

S E R M O N VII.

Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]

I COR. XV. 14.

And if Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith also is vain.

THE great Foundation of our Hope of S E R M. Immortality, is the Revelation of the VII. Gospel; and the great Evidence of the Truth of that Revelation, is the Resurrection of Christ. Without the Revelation of the Gospel, our Hope of Immortality, according to men's different Abilities in philosophical Speculations, had continued disputable; and, without the Resurrection of Christ, the Proofs of the Truth of the Gospel-Revelation had been finally frustrated. As therefore the Truth of the Christian Revelation is of the greatest importance to men's Souls, *in the whole*; so the proof of the Resurrection of Christ, is of the greatest importance towards se-

I 2

curing

S E R M. curing the Certainty of that Revelation, in particular. By the Light of Nature, the Being and Attributes of God, were certain and demonstrable; the Probability of a future State, was great and undeniable; the expectation of God's dealing mercifully with penitent Sinners, was reasonable and hopeful. But by the Revelation of the *Gospel* only, was this great Hope secured to us; the Pardon of Sin declared *authentically*, by the Authority of God; Life and Immortality brought to light by *Testimony*, as well as by rational Arguments; the Rewards and Punishments of Eternity, *distinctly* set forth; and the particular Method of the final Judgment, *affectionately* represented to us.

IN like manner, as to the *Evidence* of the Truth of This Revelation; By the Prophecies of the Old Testament, it was long before predicted; By the reasonableness of the Doctrine itself, it was made very credible; By the Witness of our Lord and his Apostles, it was strongly attested; By the conviction and silencing of its Adversaries, it was confirmed and established; By many Signs and Wonders and mighty Works done by Christ in his Life, it was *for the present* proved beyond contradiction; But by this *last* Evidence only, by the *Resurrection of our Lord from the Dead*, was it for ever ascertained to all generations. For had this *last* Proof failed, all the rest must in course have fallen with it. The Prophecies would have appeared wonderful, but never fulfilled;

filled; The Doctrine would have continued reasonable, but it's Author perished; The Miracles of his Life would have remained astonishing, but still confuted by his Death; His *Enemies* would have continued to insult him, as did the *Jews*; *He saved others, himself he could not save*: And his *Friends*, that loved his Doctrine, and hoped for the Salvation of God, could *but* have joined with his desponding Disciples; *We trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*. In a word; as St. Paul expresses it in the Text, had *not Christ* risen again, then had *our whole Preaching been vain, and your Faith also in vain*.

THE Resurrection of Christ, therefore, being a Fact of so great importance, on which the Evidence of the Truth of the *whole* Revelation finally depended; it was necessary, in the Wisdom of Providence, and in the Reason of Things, that the Proof of this great Fact should be made unanswerably strong. In the following Discourse therefore, I shall, *1st*, endeavour to set before you briefly, and in one view, the particulars of that great and singular Care, which was taken to make the *Proof* of the Fact undeniable, that our Saviour *did really* rise from the Dead. *2dly*, I shall consider what were the *Effects* of This his Resurrection, with respect to *Christ himself*; and, *3dly*, what were the Effects of it with regard to *Us*.

1st, As to the extraordinary Care that was taken, to make the *Proof* of the Fact itself un-

SER M. deniable, that our Saviour *did really rise from*
 VII. the Dead; there was (1st,) in the *first* place
 Notice given of it *antecedently*, by the Prophecies of the Old Testament delivered long before.
Pf. xvi. 10. Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; that is, in the State of the Dead; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption. That This was an exprefs Prediction of our Saviour's Resurrection; the Apostles, in their application of it in the Book of the *Acts*, show by the following Argument. The words thus spoken by *David*, must of necessity be meant, either of *Himself*, or of some *Other Person*. Of *Himself*, they could not literally be meant, because it was not *true* that *He* was raised before he saw corruption. And if they were meant of any *other Person*, the *Jews themselves* (norwithstanding all their Prejudices) would readily acknowledge, that That *other Person* so mentioned by way of Eminence, could, according to the Analogy of the Prophetick writings, be *no other* than the Messiah. This Argument is strongly urged by *St Peter*, *Acts ii. 29. Men and Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto this day; That is, He did certainly see corruption: But being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the fruit of his Loins according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He, seeing This before, spake of the Resurrection of*
 Christ,

Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, nor his SERM.
 flesh did see corruption. And by St Paul in the VII.
 same book, *ch. xiii. 36.* David (says he,) after
 he had served his own generation by the will of
 God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his Fathers,
 and saw corruption; But he whom God raised
 again, saw no corruption: Therefore these words
 of the Psalmist, *Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy*
One to see corruption, were spoken, not of David
 himself, but of the Resurrection of Christ.
 After This, and other antient Prophecies; there
 were, (2dly,) in the next place, plain Notifications
 given by our Lord himself, to his Disciples be-
 fore his Suffering; that they should expect his
 Rising from the Dead. And because it was a
 matter of the greatest Importance, he therefore
 repeated This Admonition to them several times.
 First, before his Transfiguration, (*Matth. xvi. 21.*)
From that time forth began Jesus to show unto
his Disciples, how that he must — suffer many
things, — and be killed, and be raised again
the third day. Then again, after his Transfigu-
 ration, (*ch. xvii. 9.*) *As they came down from the*
Mountain, Jesus charged them to tell no man the
vision, till the Son of man be risen again from the
dead. Again, at his last going up to Jerusalem,
 (*ch. xx. 17.*) *he took the twelve disciples apart in*
the way, and said unto them—The Son of man
shall be betrayed unto the chief Priests,—and they
shall condemn him to death, — and the third day
he shall rise again. Besides which plain admo-

SERMON. *itions to his Disciples, he gave some obscure*
 VII *hints of it to the whole People also; when, upon*
 W *the Jews requiring of him a Sign, at one time*
he said unto them, (John ii. 19.) Destroy this
Temple, and in three days I will raise it up; and
at another time, (Matth. xii. 39.) To an evil and
adulterous generation there shall no Sign be given,
but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas; For as Jonas
was three days and three nights in the Whale's belly,
so shall the Son of Man be three days and three
nights in the Heart of the Earth. The Design and
Use of which Predictions, though not at all un-
derstood at the time they were spoken, is declared
to us by the Evangelist, John ii. 22. When
therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples
remembered that he had said this unto them; and
they believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus
had said. And Luke xxiv. 6. Remember, said
the Angel to the persons which came first to the
Sepulchre, Remember how he spake unto you —
saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the
hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third
day rise again; And they remembered his words.
Further; (3dly,) in order to make the Proof of
his Resurrection still more evident, the Place, and
Manner, and Circumstances of his Burial, were by
Providence directed to be particularly remarkable,
Mark xv. 42. Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable
Counsellor, begged his Body, and wrapped it in fine
linen, and laid it in his own Sepulchre; And this
in the presence of several of Jesus's followers;
 and in I who

who thereupon resolving to come and embalm him, were providentially directed to become Witnesses of many Circumstances attending his Resurrection. *Lastly*, The Method which his Adversaries themselves took, to find evidence (as they thought) of the *Imposture*; making the Sepulchre sure, sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch, (Matth. xxvii. 66.) was by Providence designed on the contrary, to become a strong Proof of the Truth of his Resurrection; taking away all pretense or possibility of that plausible Objection, that *his Disciples came by Night and stole him away*.

THESE are the principal Instances, of the Care that was taken in the Circumstances going before our Lord's Resurrection, to render the Proof of the Fact certain and undeniable. After his Rising again, the accumulative Evidence of the Truth of his being risen, is much greater, not only than what Unbelievers, but even than Believers themselves, without putting together the numerous Circumstances recorded in different places of Scripture, can easily imagine. (1st,) In the first place, an *Earthquake* terrified the Watch, and the Appearance of an *Angel* made them become as dead men, Matth. xxviii. 2. Then, (2dly,) the persons who came with a design to embalm the Body, saw likewise an Angel, and were told by him that their Lord was risen from the Dead, ver. 6. Immediately after this, *Jesus himself* appeared to them, and comforted them, ver. 9.

To

SERMON. To which St John adds this particular circumstance, ch. xx. 17. that when one of them embraced his Feet, rejoicing and worshipping him upon his discovering himself who he was, he said unto her, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.* Which words most Interpreters so understand, as if they signified, *Do not detain me Now, as if you thought I was immediately leaving you; For I shall continue with you some time, and am not presently ascending to my Father.* But I think the truer meaning of them is, *Do not expect I should continue with you Now; for 'tis expedient and necessary, that I first ascend to my Father.* And therefore he adds in the very next words; *But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Tell them, that I am risen from the dead, never to die any more; that I am about to return to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, to receive full Power over all things both in Heaven and Earth, and to prepare a place for you; and Then, where I am, there shall ye be also.* After This, (3dly,) he appeared to Two of his Disciples going to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 13. and talked with them, and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Then again (4thly,) he showed himself to Peter alone, ver. 34. and 1 Cor. xv. 5. Then (5thly,) to St James, ver. 7. After That, (6thly,) to Seven of the Apostles together, John xxi. 2. Then (7thly,) to Ten of Them, Thomas only being absent, John xx. 19.

And,



And, (8^{thly}.) a week after, to *all the Eleven*, ver. 26. *Thomas* being present with them; whose doubting Faith he vouchsafed to confirm, by suffering him to handle him; yet at the same time pronouncing a greater Blessing upon those who should *not see*, and yet would *believe*; Not that *Credulity* or *believing without reason*, is in any case commendable; but, that believing, upon reasonable and good evidence, things not obvious to Sense; such as are the Being of the *Invisible* God, the Rewards and Punishments of a future State which now are likewise *invisible*, and the coming of our Saviour to Judgment though he does not presently appear; are the most valuable Acts of religious Faith and Dependence upon God. *Lastly*, After these several more *private* appearances of our Lord to his Apostles, *he was seen* (saith St Paul) *of above five hundred brethren at once*, 1 Cor. xv. 6. *of whom* though some were *fallen asleep*, yet the *greater part* remained alive unto that *present* time, when St Paul wrote this epistle to the *Corinthians*. And in this manner continued he for *forty days* together *showing himself alive after his passion by many infallible Proofs*, and *speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, Acts i. 3. After which, at mid-day, in the presence of all the Apostles, he was taken up from them visibly into Heaven, ver. 9. And they were told by Angels, ver. 11. what *he also himself* had before told them in his Life-time, that in like manner as they saw him go into Heaven,

S E R M. ven, so from thence likewise should they see him
 VII. come, at the end of the World, with Power and
 great Glory, even in the Glory of his Father, and all his holy Angels with him, to judge the Quick and Dead with a righteous and unerring Sentence, rendering to every man impartially according to his Works. Put all this Evidence now together, and let it be considered fairly in one View; Evidence given by so many different *Persons*, repeated at so many different *Times*, diversified with such variety of *Circumstances*, yet all agreeing in such a perfect Uniformity as to the *Thing itself*. And was there ever more undeniable Proof given, of any matter of Fact in the World? Nevertheless, after all this, he appeared again to St Stephen, Acts vii. 55. And again to St Paul, as he himself testifies, 1 Cor. xv. 8. *Last of all* (says he) *he was seen of Me also, as of one born out of due Time*. Besides all which *Claud* of *Eye-witnesses*, the Truth of our Lord's Resurrection continued moreover to be proved, by the *Miracles* which the *Apostles* worked in his Name, *i. e.* through his Power and Authority; Also by the *Prophecies* he himself delivered, both before and after his Suffering; The gradual fulfilling of which Prophecies in all succeeding times, has been and is a standing Proof of our Lord's being truly risen, and that he is invested with all Power, to accomplish whatever he has foretold. He clearly predicted, in the fullest and most distinct manner, the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Deso-

Acts ix. 3.

1 Cor. ix.

1.

Gal. i. 15.

Desolation of the whole *Jewish* Nation: Which S E R M.
 Nation should yet nevertheless continue in Being VII.
 (as we see in fact it does at this day,) *till the times*
of the Gentiles be fulfilled, Luke xxi. 24. He fore-
 told, that his Disciples should be hated both by
Jews and *Gentiles*, and persecuted from one City
 to another. That nevertheless their Doctrine
 should spread over the whole Earth, and, by the
 mere Force of Truth and Reason, of Goodness
 and Charity, should prevail over all the Vio-
 lence, and be established against all the Opposi-
 tion of human Authority. That after having so
 prevailed over all *outward* Enemies, it should,
 by an unaccountable corruption within *itself*, be
 over-run with almost a total Apostacy; the Power
 and Authority of *Men* taking upon themselves to
 sit in the Seat of *God*; and compelling all men
 by Force and Violence, to submit to Doctrines
 of their own Invention; and turning Christ's Re-
 ligion of Peace and Love, of Meekness and Cha-
 rity, into a worldly Religion of Dominion and
 Power, of Contentiousness, Hatred, and Oppres-
 sion. All which predictions having been already
 exactly and particularly fulfilled, in the plainest
 and most remarkable manner; give abundant
 reason to expect, that what still remains, shall
 likewise in it's time be no less punctually accom-
 plished. That when the just pleasure of God
 has been performed, and the Christian World
 shall for its great Corruptions have been justly
 punished by those Corruptions themselves; at
 length

S E R M. length the Kingdoms of the Earth, shall become
 VII. the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;
 and men leaving off to contend about their own
 vain Notions and unreasonable Pretences of Power
 and Dominion, shall agree in the original Simplicity
 of that pure and undefiled Religion, the Sum of which,
 our Lord himself tells us, consists in *loving the Lord our God with all our Heart,*
and our Neighbours as ourselves.

THE Truth of our Lord's Resurrection being thus *attested* by such a Multitude of *Witnesses*, and *confirmed* by such a Number of consequent *Facts*, that it is hardly possible the first Preachers of his Doctrine should either Themselves have been deceived, or be Deceivers of Others; we may now easily answer that obvious Objection, suggested *Acts x. 40. why* Christ after his Resurrection *showed himself openly, not to all the people, but unto Witnesses only, chosen before of God.* And the Reason hereof is the same, as why in all other cases God does not all that he is *able* to do, but all that is *fit and right* for him to do. There is in every *Means*, a certain *Fitness and Proportion* to the *End* it leads to; wherewith if men will not be satisfied, there are no limits to unreasonable expectations, and no bounds where groundless imaginations may stop. The Wisdom of God provided as many unquestionable Witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ, as the Nature of the Thing required; as was sufficient, to make the Fact incontestable; as was satisfactory, to any

reasonable and unprejudiced person. To work SER.M.
more Miracles for the sake of obstinate and vici- VII.
 ous Unbelievers, God was not obliged. And,
 if he *had* done it, the Objection would still have
 increased without End. For if it was not suffi-
 cient, that Christ showed himself openly to a
Number of Witnesses; but it had been necessary
 that he should appear personally to the *whole* City
 of Jerusalem; for the same Reason it might be
 fancied necessary, that he should have shown him-
 self also to the whole *Jewish Nation*; and for the
 same Reason, to all other *Nations* likewise; and
 to These, in *Every Age of the World*, as well as
 in *One Age*; and that, to *every single* Person, if
 one miraculous appearance was not sufficient, he
 might have shown himself *oftner* and with *more*
 miraculous circumstances; and so on, without
 End. Which shows plainly the unreasonableness
 of all *Such* Expectations; when men are not satis-
 fied with that Evidence which is fit and sufficient
 in its kind.

I SHALL conclude this Head, concerning the
Evidence of the Fact of Christ's being risen from
 the Dead, with only one Observation about the
Manner of his rising. Which is, that in more
 than thirty passages of the New Testament, it is
 expressly affirmed that *God* raised up our Lord
 from the Dead, or that he was raised by the
 Power of the *Father*; and yet in two or three o-
 ther places it is no less plainly asserted, that *Christ*
 raised up *himself*. Which different expressions
 might

S E R M. might have seemed very difficult to be reconciled,
 VII. but that our Saviour himself has in a most remarkable passage upon this Subject, (as it were *on purpose*) explained them to us with the greatest accuracy and exact distinctness. *John x. 18. No man saith he, taketh my Life from me, but I lay it down, of myself; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; This Commandment, (that is, This Commission, this Power,) have I received of my Father.* I proceed now in the third place, To consider what were the *Effects* of Christ's Resurrection with respect to our Lord himself. And they were, 1st, that thereby he was effectually, and in a most convincing manner, declared to be *the Son of God*; Declared to be *the Son of God* with Power, saith St Paul, *by the Resurrection from the Dead*, Rom. i. 4. Inasmuch that even those words of the Psalmist, *Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee*, are by the same Apostle, in his Sermon to the People of *Antioch*, applied to this very purpose: *Acts xiii. 32. The Promise which was made unto the Fathers, God has fulfilled (says he) unto Us their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again: as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Not that Christ Then began to be the Son of God, but that he was Then declared to be so, by a most powerful and effectual Proof; having loosed the pains of Death, and shown that it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 2^{dly}, Another Effect of Christ's Resurrection, with

with regard to our Lord himself, was his being S E R M. thereby declared the Judge of Quick and Dead. VII.

Acts x. 40, 42. Him God raised up the third day, — and commanded us — to testify, that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. And ch. xvii. 31. God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath appointed, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead.

If it be here asked, the appointing a day of general Judgment, being a Truth of so great importance to Mankind; why then was it not declared Sooner and Universally, in All Ages, and to All People? The true Answer (I think) is, that in the Whole, the Rule of Righteousness and the great expectation of a Judgment to come, is in all Times and in all Places the same; And yet the several Dispensations, or particular Methods and Degrees of God's manifesting these Truths to Mankind, by the Light of Nature and Reason, by Revelations to the Jews and Patriarchs, and by the Gospel of Christ, are and may as justly be very different, as, in other cases, it is lawful for God, the Author of All, to make people of different Capacities and in different Circumstances. And accordingly, what God, when he comes to judgment, will finally require of Men under these different Circumstances, will be proportionally different. For the Judge of the whole Earth,

SERM. will do what is right, and with Equity shall he
 VII. judge the Nations. *The Gospel was preached before,* says the Apostle, even in the days of *Abraham,* Gal. iii. 8. And even the *Gentiles,* which have not the Law revealed, are yet a Law unto themselves, *showing the work of the Law* written in their Hearts, Rom. ii. 14. So that, upon the whole, God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh Righteousness is accepted with him: For, not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified, ver 13. And on the contrary, as many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law, — in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, ver. 16.

It remains, that I proceed in the
 III^d and Last place, To consider what are the Effects of our Lord's Resurrection, with respect to Us. And they are, 1st, our *Justification*. That is to say; The Resurrection of Christ from the dead, was on God's part a publick and authentick Declaration of his accepting the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, as an Atonement for the Sins of all that truly repent. This is the Meaning of those Passages of St Paul, where he tells us, that *Christ was delivered for our Offences,* and *raised again for our Justification;* Rom. iv. 25. That *We,* that is, *wicked men* both among *Jews* and *Gentiles,* having been *dead in Sin,* that is, having

having been in a State of condemnation; *God, S. E. R. M. who raised Christ from the dead, hath quickened Us together with Him,* (has restored us to the hope of eternal life,) *having forgiven us all Trespasses;* Col. ii. 13. And that, *if Christ be not raised, we are yet in our sins,* 1 Cor. xv. 17. that is, if Christ be not risen, we have *Then* no evidence of God's having accepted Christ's Mediation for us; nor consequently of *our* being justified, or having our Repentance accepted; to such *Degrees* and *Purposes* at least, as God has now declared that it shall be accepted through Faith in Him.

2dly, *THE second Effect of the Resurrection of Christ, with regard to Us; is our Sanctification or Regeneration:* That is, our rising from the death of Sin, unto a Life of Righteousness. *Rom. vi. 4. We are buried with him by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life; that having been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we should be also in the likeness of his Resurrection.* The Meaning of the Apostle is; that the Death and Resurrection of Christ into which we are baptized, and whereof Baptism is an Emblem, ought to be a perpetual obligation upon us, to rise from the Death of Sin unto the spiritual Life of Righteousness and Holiness: *Col. ii. 12. and iii. 1. Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.* — *If ye then (saith he) be risen with Christ, seek*

SER M. *those things which are above; For ye are dead, that*
 VII. *is, dead to Sin, (as the same Apostle explains it,*
Rom. vi. 2.) and your Life is hid with Christ in
God. And what he means by that Phrase, hid
with Christ in God, is explained in the next verse,
ch. iii. 3. When Christ, who is our Life, shall ap-
pear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

FOR 3dly, The Third and Last Effect of the Resurrection of Christ, with respect to Us, is the Assurance of Our Resurrection likewise; unto Glorification. 1 Cor. xv. 20. *Now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.* And therefore this is constantly used by the Apostles, as a perpetual Argument of Consolation to good Christians; 1 Pet. i. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant Mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of (Jesus) Christ from the Dead.* Rom. viii. 11. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* And 1 Thess. iv. 14. *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

BLESSED and Happy are they, *who shall be thought worthy to obtain That Life, and the Resurrection from the Dead; For from thenceforth they shall be before the Throne of God, and shall serve him*

Of the Resurrection of Christ.

133

him day and night in his Temple; And God shall
wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall
be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying; nei-
ther shall there be any more pain: For the former
things are passed away.

SER. VII.

K 3

SER.

S E R M O N VIII.

Of CHRIST's Descent into Hell.

[Preached on Easter Day.]

PSALM xvi. 9, 10.

Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced; my flesh also shall rest in Hope. For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

S E R M.
VIII.

THE Afflictions and Calamities which fall upon many men in this present State, are of such a nature, that, were it not for the Hopes which true Religion and the Knowledge of God affords, their only Comfort would be That expectation of *Death*, which *Job* thus elegantly expresses, ch. iii. 17. *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at Rest: There the Prisoners rest together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor: The Small and Great are There, and the Servant is free from his Master. But True Religion affords virtuous and good Men*
a very

a very different Prospect; and teaches them to expect, that, if God *does not* think fit to deliver them out of their Troubles *Here*, (which yet he sometimes *does* in a very extraordinary and unexpected Manner :) yet even the *Grave itself* puts not an end to his Power of Redeeming them; but he *can* and *will* raise them up again, to a future and a better Life. So that they may look upon *Death itself*, not barely as a putting an end to their present Afflictions, but as a Passage to a Glorious and Immortal State. *Wherefore my flesh also*, says the Holy Psalmist, *shall rest in Hope : For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.*

THIS *Psalms*, of which these words are a part, seems to have been written by *David* in the time of some particular *personal Calamity*. Ver. 1. *Preserve me, O God; for in thee have I put my Trust.* The Ground of this his Trust, he expresses to be his *Adherence to the True Religion*, in opposition to the *Idolatry* of the *Nations* about him : Ver. 4, 6. *They that run after another God, shall have great Trouble ; — but The Lord himself is the Portion of Mine Inheritance, and of my Cup.* The particular affliction, which he here refers to, *whatsoever* it was; he acknowledges, proved *beneficial* to him, in fixing his Mind more *steadily* upon things relating to his *spiritual estate*: Ver. 8. *I will thank the Lord for giving me warning; my Reins also chasten me in the night-season: I have set God always before me; for he is on my right hand,*

SER M. therefore I shall not fall. And then he adds, in the
 VIII. words of the Text, the Comfort arising to him
 from the sense of this Improvement: *Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope: For why? Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.*

'Tis remarkable here, that the former part of these words; *My Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced;* are cited, Acts. ii. 26. according to the rendering of the LXX, *My Heart rejoiced, and my Tongue was glad.* Which not only, in other words, expresses the very same sense; but shows us also what it is, that the Psalmist, in Other Passages, means by his Glory. Psal. xxx. 12. *To the end that my Glory, (that is, that my Tongue,) may sing Praise to thee, and not be silent.* And Psal. lvii. 9. *Awake up, my Glory; awake, lute and harp; I my self will awake right early: That is; Both with my Voice, and with Instruments of Musick, will I sing Praise unto thee.*

THE latter part of the words; *My Flesh also shall rest in Hope: For why? Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption:* are by many understood to be a highly figurative expression in the Psalmist, of his earnest expectation of a literal and temporal Deliverance from the Affliction he was at present under. In like manner as St Paul, speaking of his own Escape from a very dangerous Persecution, calls it a deliverance from a great Death; 2 Cor. i. 9.

We

We should not trust, says he, in ourselves, but in S E R M.
God which raiseth the Dead: Who delivered us from VIII.
so great a Death, and doth deliver: In whom we 
trust that he will yet deliver us. And so likewise
those remarkable Words of Job, ch. xix. 25. I
know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall
stand at the latter day upon the Earth; And though
after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my
Flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself,
and mine Eyes shall behold, and not Another, though
my reins be consumed within me: Even These words,
I say, are by some Interpreters understood as a
Prediction, in highly figurative and prophetical ex-
pressions, of his Restoration to his Temporal
Greatness and Prosperity. But as This is a very
forced Sense of the words, and, if it were their
True Meaning, would still be at least the borrow-
ing of a Figure from the Notion and Expectation
of a Resurrection from the Dead; it is more rea-
sonable and natural to understand them in that ob-
vious and literal sense, wherein they are clearly
and plainly the Expression of a better and more
certain Hope. And, for the same reason, the
words of my Text likewise, if they are at all to be
applied to the Psalmist himself; may with a better
emphasis, and as a more assured Ground of Hope,
be understood to signify his expectation of a Fu-
ture State, than of a Temporal Deliverance. But
indeed, in their real and most proper Sense, they
are not applicable to the Psalmist himself, but to
Him of whom David was both a Prophet and a
Type;

SERMON. Type; The same Spirit of God, which through
 VIII. the whole Period of the Old Testament from the
 Beginning of the World pointed perpetually to
 Christ through an innumerable variety of Types
 and Prophecies, here likewise directing the in-
 spired Penman to such Expressions, as might be
 a strict and literal description of the Resurrection
 of Christ, but could not with the same propriety
 be applied to David. Thus the Apostle observes,
 Acts xiii. 36. *David, after he had served his own
 generation by the Will of God, fell on Sleep and was
 laid unto his Fathers, and saw corruption; But he
 whom God raised again, saw no corruption. And
 chap. ii. 29. The Patriarch David is both dead
 and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto This
 day: Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that
 God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the
 Fruit of his Loins, according to the Flesh, he would
 raise up Christ to sit on his Throne; He, seeing this
 before, spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his
 Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see
 Corruption. And 'tis remarkable, by the way;
 that, as the fore-cited words of Job, which are
 much more emphatically descriptive of the Re-
 surrection of the Dead, than of his Restoration to
 his Temporal Prosperity; are, in order to excite
 our more particular Attention, introduced with
 that extraordinary and most solemn exclamation,
*Oh that my words were now written, that they were
 printed in a Book! that they were graven with an
 iron pen, and lead, in the Rock for ever! so This*
 Psalm,*

Of Christ's Descent into Hell.

139

Psal., which contains in it so important a Pro-
phesy of Christ, is distinguished by a * *Title* pre-
fixed at the Head of it, which in the Original sig-
nifies a *Memorial engraved on Stone or Marble for*
perpetuity of Ages.

SER. M.
VIII.
Micham.

BUT to proceed.

CONCERNING that particularly remarkable
Phrase, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*; it is
to be observed, that though in our present lan-
guage, the word *Hell* in common Speech, does
Now always signify *The State of the Damned*; yet
in this Text, it is evident, it cannot be under-
stood in that Signification. For, that *David* was
not condemned to that Place of Torment, is a-
greed on all hands: And that *Christ*, of whom
David was a *Type and Prophet*, did not, by de-
scending into *Hell*, enter into that Place appointed
for the final Punishment of the wicked, is very
evident both from *Scripture* and *Reason*.

IN the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, the
word which we render *Hell*, frequently signifies
only *The State of the Dead* in general. Thus
Psal. lxxxix. 47. according to the Translation in
our *Common Prayer*; *What man is he that liveth,*
and shall not see Death; and shall he deliver his
Soul from the hand of Hell? is, in our Transla-
tion in the *Bible*, *shall he deliver his Soul from the*
hand of the Grave? And what *Solomon* affirms,
Prov. xxvii. 20. that *Hell and Destruction* are ne-
ver full, is plainly the very same in sense, with
what in *ch.* xxx. 15. is thus expressed; *There are*
three

SERM. *three things that are never satisfied, yea four things*
 VIII. *say not, it is enough: The Grave, and so on.*

In the New Testament; the word, Hell, sometimes signifies the Place appointed for the final Punishment of the wicked, and at other times it denotes only The State of the Dead in general. But this ambiguity is in our own language only, and not in the Original: For whenever the Place of Torment is spoken of, the word Hell, in the Original, is always Gehennab: but when only the State of the Dead in general is intended, it is always expressed by a quite different Name, which though We render by the same word Hell, yet it's signification is at large The Invisible State. Thus when

Jam. iii. 6. *St James says, that the Tongue, meaning a wicked and profane Tongue, is a world of iniquity, — and setteth on Fire the course of Nature, and is set on Fire of Hell: And when our Saviour says to*

Mat. xxiii. *the Pharisees, Ye serpents, ye generation of Vipers,*
 33. *how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* and tells them, that when they have gained a *Profelyte,*

ver. 15. *they make him twofold more the child of Hell, than themselves: And when he admonishes his Dis-*

cb. x. 28. *ciples to fear Him, who, after he has killed, is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell; and*

Matth. v. *warns them, that whosoever shall say unto his Brother, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-Fire; and advises them, If thy right Eye offend thee, (that is, if the Desire of any thing as dear to thee as thy Eyes, be in danger to draw thee into Sin,) pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable*

for

for thee that one of thy Members should perish, and S E R M.
not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell: In VIII.

all these Passages, I say, the word *Hell* is, in the
Original, *Gebennah*; which always signifies *The*
State of the Damned. But in Other Places, where
we, in our Rendering, still make use of the same
word, *Hell*; the Original has a very different
word, which signifies only *The invisible State*, or
the *State of the Dead* in general. Thus *Matth.*
xi. 23. *Thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto*
Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell: The
meaning is; That great and proud City should
be levelled with the Dust, and disappear utterly
as those who have been long buried in the Grave.
Again: When the rich Man in *Hell*, *lift up his*
eyes, being in Torments, *Luke xvi. 23.* the word
in the Original denotes at large That *Invisible*
State of the Dead in general, wherein were both
Abraham and *Lazarus in his Bosom*, (and the *Pa-*
radise wherein the *Penitent Thief* was to be with
our Saviour,) as well as the *Souls of the Wicked* in
their *Torments*. Again: When our Lord pro-
mises, *Matth. xvi. 18.* that the *Gates of Hell*
should not prevail against his Church; the * words,
(*Gates of Hell*,) properly and strictly rendred, sig-
nify *The Passage to the Invisible State*, that is,
Death: And the Sense of his Promise is, that
even *Death itself*, (which is the utmost Extent of
all Persecution from *Those who kill the Body, and*
after that, have no more that they can do,) should
never be able to suppress his Doctrine, and extin-
guish

S E R M. guish his Religion in the World. Lastly; When
 VIII. it is declared in the Prophecy concerning the end
 of the World, *Rev. xx. 13, 14.* that *Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in Them;* and that, after the Judgment, *Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire;* it is very evident, that *Hell* in these Passages cannot possibly signify *The State of the Damned;* but that *State of departed Souls in general,* from whence all shall be summoned at the Great Day of Accounts; and which *State of Death, or Death itself,* after the final Judgment, shall be no more. And thus therefore likewise in the words of my Text, as they are cited out of the *Psalms* by the Apostle *St Peter, Acts ii. 27.* *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell;* the true and complete sense is plainly this; *Thou wilt not relinquish me, thou wilt not suffer me to continue, in the State of the Dead; but wilt certainly raise me up again, at thy appointed time.*

FROM this explication of *all the Texts* relating to this matter, it is very clear that the *Scriptures* no where teach, that our Lord, by *descending into Hell,* ever entred into the Place appointed for the final Punishment of the Wicked. Nor is there any thing in *Reason,* from whence it can by any just *Consequence* be *inferred,* that it was at all requisite for him so to do.

IT has been conceived by *Some,* that it was needful for our Lord to go down into the Place of Torment, in order to render his *Satisfaction* complete, by undergoing himself the very same
 Suf-

Sufferings, which were due to those for whom he SERM. made Satisfaction. But this Notion is founded VIII. entirely upon a Mistake. For the Satisfaction of Christ, does not depend upon the *Sameness of the Sufferings*, but upon the *good pleasure of God* who ruleth over all; who has been pleased to declare himself appeased by the voluntary condescension and Sufferings of our Lord, as a sufficient Vindication of his Supreme Authority; so that he can, upon the Merit of that Sacrifice, consistently with the Honour and Dignity of his Laws, accept the *Repentance* and *Amendment* of returning Sinners, and *freely* forgive them their past Sins. But, besides this, Neither was it indeed *possible* in the Nature of things, that our Lord should *at all* undergo the Torments of the Wicked. For the Sting of *their* Punishment is the *Worm that never dieth*, and an endless *Despair of the Favour of God*; which are things altogether impossible to have fallen upon *Him*.

OTHERS therefore have fancied, that our Lord descended into *Hell*, not indeed to *suffer* any thing there *himself*, but to *deliver Others* out of that Place of Torment. But *this* also is plainly an erroneous opinion. For since the Scripture every where teaches, that *as the Tree falleth, so it shall lie*; and that, for those who die impenitent and unreformed, there is no Redemption; it is certain the *Wicked*, when once condemned, are no more capable of being delivered at all. And as to *Virtuous* and *Good* men; it is no less certain that

S E R M. that the Souls of the righteous are in the hand of
 VIII. God, and there shall no Torment touch them. They
 are in Scripture represented as being in *Paradise*,
 or in *Abraham's Bosom*; but never as being in the
Place of Torment at all.

LASTLY, therefore, it has been supposed by
 Others, that Christ descended into the place ap-
 pointed for the final Punishment of the Wicked,
 to triumph there over Satan in his own Kingdom.
 But neither is this opinion, in any wise, agree-
 able to Scripture. For the Devil and his Angels
 are not yet confined to the Pit of Destruction, be-
 fore the day of Judgment. And if they were,
 yet that is not their Kingdom, but their Place of
 Punishment. The Kingdom of the Devil, is the
 Prevalency and Dominion of Sin in this World;
 And here Christ triumphs over him, by convert-
 ing men from their Sins and Debaucheries, from
 their Unrighteousness and Iniquities, which are
 the Works of the Devil; to the Practice of Vir-
 tue, Justice, Goodness, Temperance, Charity,
 and Truth, which are the establishment of the
 Kingdom of God upon Earth.

UPON the Whole, therefore, there is no suffi-
 cient Foundation, either in the Reason of the
 Thing, or in the Declarations of Scripture, to sup-
 pose that our Lord ever descended at all into the
 Place of Torment, into the Place appointed for
 the final Punishment of the Wicked. But the
 full Meaning, both of those words in my Text,
Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; and of all the

Other

Other Passages in Scripture, relating to that mat-
ter; is, that our Lord continued in the State of S E R M.
VIII.
the Dead, in the Invisible State of departed Souls,
during the Time appointed; but that, it not be-
ing possible for him to be holden of Death, he was
raised again *without seeing corruption.*

THE natural Inference from which Doctrine,
both of our Lord's overcoming Death, and of
good men's being assured consequently that *They*
shall overcome it also; is, *That Hope and Comfort*
to virtuous and religious Minds under all *Tempo-*
ral Afflictions whatsoever, of which the Psalmist
expresses his Sense in the words whereof my Text
are a part. *I have set the Lord always before me;*
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth;
my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For thou wilt not
leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine
Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the
path of Life; In thy presence is fulness of Joy, at
thy right hand are Pleasures for evermore.

THE Resurrection of Christ, is the Great Evi-
dence of the Truth of his Doctrine. And a Prin-
cipal Part of his Doctrine, is, the *bringing Life*
and Immortality to Light; or, the giving us an
Assurance, that, as Christ is risen from the Dead,
so *We* also, if we imitate him in the Obedience
of his Life, shall, after Death, rise with him unto
Glory. The Condition and Circumstances of this
present transitory Life are such, that, without
the expectation of a future and a better State, the

S E R M. *Satisfactions of Life are very uncertain and precarious, and in Death there is no foundation of*
 VIII.

Hope. They who enjoy the *Greatest Affluence* of the good things of this present time, yet have them mixt with so many Interruptions, with so many Fears, with so many Anxieties and Vexations of Life, if in *These things alone* their Prospect of Happiness is terminated; that, upon the Whole, it can hardly be said, that their *Pleasures compensate* for their *Uneasinesses*: But with regard to *far the greatest part* of Mankind; what St. Paul affirms concerning *Christians in particular*, that, *if in this Life only they have Hope*, they are of all Men the most miserable; may, with equal Truth, be asserted generally concerning Men; if in *This Life only they have Hope*, they are of All *Creatures* the most miserable. The *wisest and best* men therefore, even in the *Heathen World*, have, in All Ages and in all Nations, from the consideration of the *Natural reason of Things*, from their *idea* of the *Attributes and Perfections* of God, and from the *unequal Distribution* of things in the *present Life*; justly and strongly argued themselves into a Belief and Expectation of a *Future* and a *Better State*. They argued, that nothing can be imagined more vain and empty, nothing more void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the *Fabrick* of the World and the *Creation* of Mankind; if all this was done without any further design, than only for the maintaining a perpetual Succession of such short-lived Generations of

Mortals, as we at present are; to live in the ut-
most Confusion and Disorder for a very few years,
and then perish eternally into nothing. They ar-
gued, that, since this *could not rationally* be the
case, there *must* consequently be a *Future State*.
And if so; then the Calamities and Afflictions,
which in this World often fall upon the Best of
men, cannot but be intended some way for their
Benefit, if not *Here*, yet certainly *Hereafter*.

S E R M.
VIII.

THE *Patriarchs* of old, who, besides *this gene-
ral Light of Nature*, had moreover some *particu-
lar* Manifestations of God, carried this matter
still further: And though Life and Immortality
was not *completely* revealed to them, yet from the
Manner of God's dealing with them, they assuredly
gathered, that his Promises did not terminate in
this Mortal Life. Accordingly, they *so* behaved
themselves in this *present World*, as showed plainly
that they sought a *better country*, that is, an *hea-
venly*; Looking for a *City which hath foundations*,
whose Builder and Maker is God. They endured
by Faith, as seeing him who is *Invisible*; and often
were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they
might obtain a better Resurrection. Saying with
the Psalmist in the Text, even in *Death* itself;
*My Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my
Flesh also shall rest in Hope; For thou wilt not leave
my Soul in Hell, nor suffer thy Holy one to see cor-
ruption*.

AND if *This* was the Behaviour of those who
saw the Promises *only afar off*, and had them re-

S E R M. vealed to them *only in Types and Figures*; What

VIII.  manner of persons ought *We* to be, to whom *Life and Immortality* are now clearly and distinctly brought to *Light* by the Gospel? And if we live *worthy* of the *Vocation* wherewith we are called; how gladly may we say with St Paul, under *Any Troubles* of life whatsoever; that *our light affliction* which is but for a *Moment*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal *Weight of Glory*: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal, but the things which are not seen, are eternal.

S E R M O N IX.

Of CHRIST'S fitting on the Right
Hand of GOD.

[*Preached on Ascension-Day.*]

H E B. viii. 1.

Now of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sam: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.

IN the foregoing chapter, the Apostle sets forth at large, the Excellency of our Saviour's perpetual and unchangeable Priesthood; by comparing it with that mutable and successive one among the Jews. Ver. 23. *They truly were many Priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of Death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever*

S E R M.
IX.

SERM. *liveth to make intercession for them. For such an*

IX.

High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the people's; but has, by One Offering of himself, for ever perfected them that are sanctified. The full explication of this Doctrine, and of the Consequences of it, is the Subject of this whole Epistle: And a brief Summary of it, is given us in the words of the Text; Now of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sum: We have Such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.

OUR Lord, after his Resurrection, as we find it recorded in the Gospels and in the History of the Acts, showed himself alive to his Disciples by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; conversing with them familiarly, opening their Understandings, expounding to them the Scriptures, explaining to them in all the Prophets the things concerning Himself, directing them in what manner they should preach the Gospel to all Nations, and promising to be with them by the Assistance of his Spirit even unto the End of the World. By which means when they were fully instructed for the execution of their Office, he departed from them, ascending visibly into Heaven, in such a manner as is described by St. Paul under the prophetick words of the Psalmist,

mist, *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men: Now — He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.* From thenceforth therefore, we have (as the Text expresses it) *such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.* S E R M. IX.

THE word *Heaven*, when applied to the Omnipresent God, as in that expression of Solomon, *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few;* and in that compellation wherewith our Lord begins his Prayer, *Our Father which art in Heaven;* The word, *Heaven*, I say, when thus applied to God does not signify literally a particular place, in point of Situation; but figuratively, a State of highest Dignity and Supreme Dominion. For God, being essentially present every where, cannot be really and literally, in one place more than in another. But he can make particular manifestations of his Glory, when and where and how he pleases: And where he does this in the most conspicuous manner, *That place is called, by way of Eminence, his Habitation, his Throne, his Presence.* Now because the *Heavens*, are higher than the Earth; because *thence* are derived all beneficial Influences, upon this lower World; because *there* is the Habitation of Angels, attending upon the Commands of God; therefore God, who is really and essentially present every where alike, yet, with regard to the Ex-

SERM. *cise of his Power and the manifestation of his Glory,*

IX. *is to Us represented as being particularly in Heaven.* And *thither* therefore did our Lord *Jesus Christ* accordingly ascend, to the highest place of Glory and Dignity, to the most immediate Presence of the Majesty of God, to *his* Father and *our* Father, to *his* God and *our* God; and *sat down* (as the Text with great elegance expresses it) *on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.*

THIS phrase, *The Majesty*, used thus absolutely and indefinitely, without mentioning the person to whom it belongs; is, in a very sublime and emphatical manner, expressive of the *Super-eminent* Glory and Majesty of God. It sets forth to us in *such* a sense, the *singular* and *transcendent* Glory of the Divine Majesty; as that *comparatively* speaking, there is *no other* Majesty but *His*. Thus, in *other* places of Scripture, when God is styled absolutely and by way of Eminence, *The Holy One*; *The Blessed*, (as *Mark* xiv. 61. *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?*) *The Power*, (as in the verse next following, *Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power*;) *The Excellent* Glory, (as *2 Pet.* i. 17. *There came such a Voice to him from the Excellent Glory*;) The sense of these Expressions is, that, *comparatively* speaking, there is none *Holy*, none *Blessed*, none *Powerful*, none *Glorious*, but *He* alone. Good Men, are in Scripture frequently styled *Holy*; and *Angels*, are the holy *Angels of God*; and

and yet of him and to him alone 'tis said, *Thou* SERM.
IX.
only art holy. *Angels* and the *Souls of Men* are

immortal; and yet of *Him* it is in a most just sense affirmed, that *He only hath Immortality*. Others have Wisdom ascribed to them in their Degree and Order, and yet *He* nevertheless is *God only Wise*. Others are, in their rank and proportion, truly and justly called Good; and yet our Lord, with peculiar Emphasis and high Propriety, declares, *There is None Good, but One, that is, God*.

The Scripture, without any Scruple, calls *temporal Deliverers, Saviours*; Nehem. ix. 27. And our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in the *spiritual* and infinitely *higher* sense, is by way of Eminence, styled *Our Saviour*: And yet the *Father, Almighty*, (who in *St Paul's* language, *Tit. iii. 4, 5.* is *God our Saviour* which *saves us through Jesus Christ our Saviour*;) declares concerning himself, *Isaiah xliii.*

II. Besides Me, there is no Saviour. The manner of speaking, is very *just*, as well as lofty and sublime; and it is useful and proper, in order to keep up in men's minds a due and awful sense of the supreme and unapproachable Greatness of God. Others have *Power* ascribed to them, and *Dominion* and *Majesty*; There are, as *St Paul* tells us, *Gods many, and Lords many, in Heaven and in Earth*, 1 Cor. viii. 5. Some *falsely* so called; Others rightly, in *such* a sense as the Scripture gives the Title of *Gods* and *Lords* to *Angels* and to *Men*: Yet, for all that, *there is still really no other God but One*: and the *Majesty*, absolutely speaking,

SERMON. ing, is His alone. Our High Priest, is set on the
 IX. right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the
 Heavens.

THE term, *Right Hand*, when applied to God, is not to be understood *literally*, as denoting a particular *Situation* with regard to *Place*, (for God has no *Hands*, no *Shape* or *Parts*;) but it signifies *figuratively* a *State* of high *Dignity*, *Dominion* and *Power*, next and immediately after God the Father himself. Our Saviour's being advanced to the *Right Hand of God*, is his being actually invested with that *Glory and Dignity*, for the *Joy* of which, when it was set before him, he willingly endured the *Cross*, (Heb. xii. 2.) *despising the Shame*, and is set down at the right hand of the *Throne of God*; That is, has overcome *Death*, and entered into his *Kingdom of Glory*. And therefore, in other places of *Scripture*, the very same *Notion* is set forth under the parallel expressions, that *Him hath God exalted with his right hand*, to be a *Prince and a Saviour*; to be *Lord both of the Dead and Living*: to be the *Head of all Principality and Power*, the *Head over all things to the Church*: That he hath given him *All Power both in Heaven and Earth*, and put all things in *subjection under his feet*; *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers*, being made subject unto him: That he has appointed him *Heir of all things*, and according to the working of his mighty *Power*, has set him set above all *principality and power and might and dominion*, and every name that is named, not only in

This

This World, but also in That which is to come; That S E R M.
at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things IX.
in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under
the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Fa-
ther. All which exalted characters, are empha-
tically included in this one figurative expression;
the Right Hand of God, the Right Hand of the
Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.

Lastly, T H E word, *sitting*, or *being set*, is likewise to be understood, not *literally*, as denoting a *particular corporeal Posture*; (for in other places of Scripture it is expressed that our Lord *Is at the right hand of God, or that he stands at the right hand of God*;) But the word, *sitting*, is for *this reason* more frequently used in the case before us, because it implies, in it's *figurative Use and Signification, Fullness of Possession, and perpetuity of retaining the Glory possessed.* Heb. x. 12. *After he had offered One Sacrifice for sins, he for ever sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting, till his Enemies be made his foot-stool; For by One Offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* From the Time of our Lord's ascending into Heaven, till his second Coming to Judgment, there were *Many Ages to pass over*: And therefore St Peter in his Sermon to the Jews, Acts. iii. 19. tells them, that *when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto them; whom the Heaven must*

SERM. must receive, until the times of restitution of all
IX. things.

THE Office which our Saviour executes during this his continuance in Heaven, is signified to us in the Text under the character of *High Priest*: *We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of —the Majesty in the Heavens.* And the explication of the Nature of *this Office*, as applied to our Lord, is the principal subject of this whole Epistle. Upon which account, the words of the Text are thus introduced by the Apostle: *Of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.* As, among the Jews, the *High Priest* in the Temple entred once a year into the Holy Place, with the Blood of Others, so Christ having once in the End of the World put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself, it was necessary that He with his Own blood should enter once likewise into the Holy Place, into That within the Veil, having obtained eternal redemption for us; That is, it was necessary that he should ascend into Heaven, to finish and present his most acceptable oblation before God, for the propitiation of the Sins of the World. For so the Apostle interprets it: *Christ* (says he) *is not entered into the Holy Places made with hands, which are only the Figures of the True; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

THE

THE first and immediate Effect of this his appearing in the Presence of God for us, was the S E R M. IX.

Mission of the Holy Ghost. Before our Saviour's Exaltation, the Holy Ghost, says the Evangelist, (speaking comparatively,) was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified, John vii. 39. And our Lord himself: I tell you the Truth, says he; it is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: But if I depart, I will send him unto you; and—he will guide you into all Truth. Accordingly, at the Pentecost after Christ's Ascension, the Holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles in a singular and most miraculous manner, beyond the Examples of former Inspirations. And by the continual assistance and ordinary operations of the same Spirit has our Lord promised to be with us his true Disciples, to be in the midst of them wherever two or three are gathered together in his Name, even unto the End of the World.

BUT further: The Scripture represents this our Great *High Priest*, as continually *interceding* for us at the right hand of God, from the time of his Ascension till his final coming to Judgment. *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our Sins: For our Sins; that is, for the Sins of all those who truly repent and effectually amend their Lives, according to the gracious Terms of the Gospel; and who are therefore accordingly represented as having washed their robes, and made them*

SERMON. *them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* For persons

IX.

of *this* disposition, our Saviour is a perpetual and effectual Advocate, to obtain perfect forgiveness of their past Sins, and to cleanse them by the perpetual Assistance of his Spirit, from all unrighteousness. They have an *High Priest*, not who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, but who was himself tempted in all points like as they are, yet without Sin. And he is able also, as as well as willing, to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25. And because he thus lives for ever, and has an *unchangeable Priesthood*, therefore he is said in Scripture to be a Priest, not after the Order of *Aaron*, which was a perpetual Succession of Priests not suffered to continue by reason of Death; but after the Order of *Melchisedec*, who was both *Prince* and *High Priest*, and of whom is recorded neither Predecessor nor Successor, that he might be a Type and Emblem of him who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

SOME Unbelievers there have been in all Ages, and still are, who, in opposition to this great Doctrine of Christianity, alledge, that God being always omnipresent and ready to hear the Prayers which every one offers for himself, therefore there was *no need* of appointing a Mediator; and that God always acting, in his own Nature, according to the exact Right and Reason of the Case, therefore he cannot be *changed*, or have any

any *Affection moved*, by the interposition of any S E R M.
 Intercessor whatsoever. But in this matter they IX.
 greatly mistake. For if God's being himself
 every where present, were a sufficient reason why
no Mediator should be appointed to intercede for
Men; it would by the same argument be also a
 sufficient reason, why Men should neither pray
 nor intercede for *themselves*: For God *knows* their
 Wants as perfectly, even without their ever pray-
 ing for *themselves*, as without a *Mediator* inter-
 ceding for them. If therefore, notwithstanding
 God's Omnipresence and Omniscience, it be still
 reasonable to require that men should pray for
themselves; in order to keep up in their Minds a
 constant sense of God, and that they may make
 continual Acknowledgment of their Dependence
 upon him: It may in like manner be very rea-
 sonable, in order to keep up in their Minds a just
 sense of their own *Unworthiness*, and of the true
Demerit of Sin, to require of them, that through
 such a *Mediator* only, as he has thought fit to
 appoint, should they have Access to *Him who is*
of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. And though
 it be indeed very true, that by no intercession
 whatsoever, can God ever be moved to act other-
 wise than is agreeable to perfect Right and Rea-
 son; yet in cases of *Mercy and Compassion*, where
 the *whole* of what he does, proceeds from mere
Free Bounty; it is evident he may convey those
 his *Free Gifts*, in what *Manner*, and upon what
Terms or Conditions, and through what *Instruments*
 he

S E R M. he pleases; and may require their being accepted
 IX. in *that* particular *Method*, or not at all. For how-
 ever *otherwise* it be in all such cases, where there
 is any Claim of *Justice*, or Demand of *Right*; yet
 undoubtedly, in Dispensations of *mere Mercy*,
 that which is true of every *Owner* even among
 frail and mortal *Men*, may with much greater
 propriety be said of *God*; shall he not do *what*
 and *how* he will, with *his own*?

THAT which remains, is, to draw two or three
practical Inferences from the whole of what has
 been said.

A N D 1st, From the Doctrine of our Lord's
 sitting at the Right Hand of God to intercede
 continually for us, and to govern his Church by
 the mission of the Holy Ghost the Comforter,
 the Apostle's inference is very natural, *Heb. iv.*
16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of
Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to
help in time of need. Again, *ch. x. 19. Having*
boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
(i. e. Having access to God through him,) by a
new and living way which he has consecrated for us;
and having an High Priest over the house of God; let
us draw near with a true Heart, in full assurance
of faith. For He that spared not his own Son, Rom.
viii. 32. how shall he not with Him also freely give
us all things? — Who is he that condemneth? It
is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again,
who is even at the right hand of God, who also
maketh intercession for us.

2^{dly}, I f

2dly, If *We* follow the example of our Lord's S E R M.
Humility and Righteousness here upon *Earth*, IX.

we may hope through him to be made Partakers also of his Exaltation in *Heaven*. I go, says he, to prepare a place for you, and — I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. Again: To him that overcometh, (that is, who perseveres in resisting the temptations of Sin;) unto him will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. These Promises caused St. Paul so to express himself, as if God had already raised us up together with Christ, and made us already sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6. The manner of expression is highly figurative; But the literal and proper Sense of it is what he elsewhere thus explains: *We have Hope*, says he, as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the Veil, whither our Fore-runner is entered for us. And if we have this Hope in us, then ought we accordingly to set our affections on things above, not on things in the Earth; that where our Treasure is, there may our Heart be also; that we may seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, and where our life is hid, (that is, deposited, laid up for us in the determinations of the divine good pleasure, it is hid) with Christ in God: that our Conversation, (the Thoughts of our Home and final Abode,) may be in Heaven, from whence also

SERMON we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

IX. who, at his coming, shall so change Us, that we shall become like him, when we shall see him as he is; and as we have born the image of the Earthly, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly. By employing our Meditations in this manner, upon our Lord's State of Exaltation in Heaven; so as to make it a continual Motive to us, to prepare ourselves to become finally Partakers of that promised inheritance; we shall contribute what in Us lies, towards fulfilling that Prophecy which he spake before his Death, *John xii. 32. And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all men unto me.*

3dly, Another proper and most important Use of the Doctrine before us, is as follows. If our Lord came down upon Earth, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself; and if, in his State of Exaltation in Heaven, the Design of his continual Intercession with God, and of his whole Government of the Church by his Spirit, be still always one and the same, even the putting away of Sin: Then from hence we may learn how great and fatal a Corruption it is of Christian Religion, for men who live wickedly, in a course of Debauchery, or in the habitual Practice of any known Sin whatsoever, to expect to obtain Salvation by relying presumptuously upon the Merits of Christ, or upon his Intercession, instead of obeying his Commands delivered in the Gospel. The Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit of-
fered

ferred himself without Spot to God, was shed not to S E R M.
 render men safe in unrighteous living, but to IX.
 purge the Conscience of such as truly repent and
 amend, to purge them from dead works to serve
 the living God, Heb. ix. 14. The End why our
 Lord gave himself for us, being, that he might
 purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good
 works. If this great End be attained; if (ac-
 cording to the language of St. John) we walk in
 the Light, (that is, in the practice of true virtue
 and holiness,) even as God is Light, and in Him
 is no darkness at all; then indeed the blood of Je-
 sus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all past Sin.
 But if we say we have fellowship with Him, and
 (still) walk in darkness; (that is, continue to live
 wickedly, and yet hope for Benefit from the pro-
 fession of God's true Religion from what Christ
 has either done or suffered for us;) we lie and do
 not the Truth, 1 John i. 6.

4thly, and lastly, As from what has been said,
 appears the Reasonableness of men's applying to
 God through that one Mediator, whom he has ap-
 pointed; so at the same Time appears likewise
 the Folly of their setting up other Mediators, of
 their own invention; such as are Angels, Saints,
 the Blessed Virgin, and the like. For there is one
 God, says the Apostle, and one Mediator between
 God and Men. And as departing from the One
 God and Father of All, who is above all, and
 through all, and in us all, is the first and highest
 Species of Idolatry; so another sort of the same

SER. M. Sin, is setting up false and imaginary Mediators,

IX.

by will-worship, by a voluntary humility, as St. Paul styles it, and worshipping of Angels; when men intrude into things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the Body by Joints and Bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

SER

S E R M O N X.

The Conversation of Christians is in
Heaven.

[*Preached on Ascension-Day.*]

PHIL. iii. 20.

*For our Conversation is in Heaven; from whence
also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus
Christ.*

I N discoursing upon these words of the Apostle, S E R M. X.
I shall 1st endeavour briefly to show, *what*
is the full meaning of this Phrase, of *having*
our Conversation in Heaven; and 2^{dly}, *what* are the
principal *Benefits and Advantages*, which may a-
rise to good men from this consideration.

I. As to the Signification of the Phrase, *hav-
ing our Conversation in Heaven*; it may properly
be understood to imply three things.

1st, O U R *meditating* frequently upon that
Heavenly State, that Kingdom of Truth, Virtue
and Happiness, which is proposed to us as the

S E R M. Reward and End of our Christian Warfare. To

X.

converse with any Person *present*, signifies *delighting* in his *Company*, or being *concerned* in his *Affairs*. To be conversant with any person *absent*, signifies holding mutual *intercourse* and *correspondence* with him; being *sollicitous* about what is *done* by him, or *happens* to him. To have our conversation in a distant Place, signifies being *much* there in our *Minds*; desiring to have an *influence* or *interest*, in what is done there; and judging, that what passes there, has an *influence* upon Us, *affects* us *nearly*, or *relates* to us more *immediately*. When therefore the Apostle affirms, as in the Text, that our *Conversation* is in *Heaven*; his meaning is, that though our *Persons* at present dwell on *Earth*, yet our *greatest Interest* and *Concerns* are in *Heaven*. Like a Merchant trading in a distant Country; his *present Abode* may be in *foreign Parts*, but his *Estate*, his *Family*, his *settled Habitation*, is at *home*; and it is of *much more importance* to him, what the *lasting State* of his Affairs is at *home*; than what happens to him *abroad*, with regard to such accidental *temporary Circumstances*, as do not much affect his *main Concerns* in his *own Country*; Thus *Christians* have their *great*, their *lasting Interest*, in *Heaven*. And though they *cannot*, they *ought not*, any more than other men, to be *insensible* of what happens to them in this *short and transitory Life*, according to the *true proportion* of things, and their *real value*; yet every thing *here*, ought chiefly to be considered,

ed, with regard to the influence it is likely to S E R M.
have upon our *future and eternal State*. Which X.
right Judgment and Estimation of things, it is
impossible men should make, unless by frequent
and serious *meditation*, they so *behold* the things
invisible, as to bring them to make *proportionably*
as strong an impression upon the *Mind*, as *Earthly*
Objects do upon the *Senses*. Many Men, like
the Brute Creatures which have no Understanding,
seem hardly to think at all upon any thing,
but what is *present* and *sensual*. But Reason in ge-
neral, and *Christianity* in particular, teaches us,
and requires of us, to judge of things according to
their *true* and *real Value*; and to be more concern-
ed about things at present *invisible*, if they be really
of *greater* and more *lasting importance* to us, than
about things which do *now* more *immediately affect*
our *Senses*. St. Paul, the great Business of whose
Life was the Care of the Churches; thus writes
to the *Corinthians*, when at a distance from them;
I verily, says he, as absent in Body, but present in
Spirit, 1 Cor. v. 3. and to the *Colossians*, ch. ii. 5.
Though I be absent in the Flesh, yet am I with you
in the Spirit, joying and beholding your Order, and
the Steadfastness of your Faith in Christ. The De-
scription the Apostle here gives of himself, with
regard to the employment of his Thoughts upon
his main Concern in *this Life*; is what every sin-
cere Christian ought to make good, with regard
to his Expectations in the *Life to come*. Though
he be in his *Body* an Inhabitant upon Earth; and

SERM. so long as he continues so, ought not, after a
 X. monkish, superstitious and enthusiastic manner, to neglect the Affairs of *Himself*, his *Family*, his *Friends*, or his *Country*; yet at the same time in *Spirit*, in the *bent* and *habitual disposition* of his *Mind*, in the *direction* of the ultimate *View* and *Aim* of all his *Actions*, he may properly be said to *converse*, and to *be*, in *Heaven*. Whoever *fears God*, and *works righteousness*, and lives with a constant Sense of Religion upon his Mind; how little *Time*, or how small *Abilities* soever he has for abstract Meditation, may yet, even in the midst of his worldly affairs, be truly said, in *this* sense, to have his *Conversation in Heaven*: Because he lives according to the *Laws of Heaven*: has in his Mind the *Temper* of Heaven; and, by the Love of Truth, and Practice of Virtue, is in a continual Preparation for the *State of Heaven*. Nevertheless, though the *Practice of Virtue and Goodness* is indeed the *End* of all religion, yet frequent and serious *Meditation* is valuable as a *Means* to *promote* that *End*, and to *encourage* that *Practice*.

THE proper Subjects *in particular* to be meditated upon, as being most likely to have an *immediate Influence* upon the Course of our Lives, and to cause our *Conversation on Earth* to be effectually preparative for that in *Heaven*; are, in the *first* place, the *Nature* of God, and of his *Relation to Us*: the consideration of his being *himself* a Person infinitely *Holy*; a *Lover* of *Virtue* and all
 of Good-

Goodness: a Hater of Iniquity, of Debauchery, and of every Corrupt Practice: a Just and Righteous Governor of all things; and a bountiful Rewarder of them who serve and obey him; in whose Presence there will finally be fullness of Joy, and at his Right Hand Pleasures for evermore. S E R M. X.

In the next place is the Consideration of Christ our Great High Priest, the Mediator of the New Covenant; who gave himself for us, that by the Doctrine and Example of his Life, and by the Merit and Influence of his Death, he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works: Who is now sat down on the Right Hand of the Throne of God in the heavenly places, to intercede for all those that truly and effectually repent: And who, at the end of the World, unto all them who with patient continuance in well doing, look for him, shall appear the second time, without Sin, unto Salvation.

THE next part of this Contemplation, tending to make us hunger and thirst after Righteousness, by having at present our Conversation in Heaven; is the consideration of the Company, by whom that region of Happiness is possessed. The Society of good Angels, who never departed from their first estate; and of good Men, who by true Repentance are returned unto it. The Society of holy Angels, who, going in and out before the Throne of God, do always behold the Face of our Father; even the Father, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named: And the Society

SER. M. tiety of holy Men, who, having washed their
 X. Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, are by Him pre-
 sented faultless before the Presence of his Father's
 Glory with exceeding Joy.

THE last part of this Contemplation, is the
 consideration of the Happiness of this State itself,
 with regard to ourselves. And in this respect in-
 deed, it doth not yet appear what we shall be: But
 we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be
 like him; for we shall see him as he is. At present
 we see only, as through a glass, darkly; For Eye
 hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter-
 ed into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things
 that God has prepared for them that love him: But
 then, we shall see face to face; and know, even
 as we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In general only,
 This we are now assured of, and a sufficient em-
 ployment it is for our Meditations upon this
 Head; that the Happiness of Heaven, tho' the
 particulars of it are not yet revealed, is a Great
 and exceeding Weight of Glory; to which the A-
 postle reckons, that nothing in this present World
 is worthy to be compared, 2 Cor. iv. 17. that it is
 a Kingdom, which cannot be moved; a Treasure,
 which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and to
 which Thieves do not break through and steal: that
 it is a Happiness pure and unmixed; For all tears
 shall then be wiped from our Eyes; and there shall
 be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying; nei-
 ther shall there be any more pain; for the former
 things are passed away: Lastly, that it is an en-
 joyment

joyment which will satisfy all our Desires; an employment which will improve to the utmost all our Faculties; and, which is the Crown of all, will continue for ever; being, as St. Peter expresses it, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away. I conclude this Head, with the words of a most excellent Writer of our own: "O blef-

Abp. Til-
lorton.

sed Time, saith he, when Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life, and Death and Sorrow shall be no more;—when we shall be eased of all our Pains, and resolved of our Doubts, and be purged from all our Sins, and be freed from all our Fears, and be happy beyond all our Hopes, and have all this Happiness secured to us beyond the Power of Time and Change! Let every Man who lives in the Practice of any known Vice, consider seriously with himself, how for one morsel of meat he sells this Birthright.

THIS is the first thing implied in the Phrase of having our Conversation in Heaven; meditating frequently and seriously upon the Happiness of that State.

2dly, HAVING our Conversation in Heaven, signifies, not only meditating upon the Happiness of that State, but practically and effectually setting our Hearts and Affections thereon. Speculative Meditations within our own Minds, or moving Discourses and fine Descriptions to others, are of no Use; unless the things meditated upon by us, or described to us, affect our Hearts, and operate in their influence upon our Lives and Actions, as

SERM. *Realities* and not as *Imaginations*. The Persons
 X. *opposite* to those whose Conversation is in Hea-
 ven, (as they are described in the *Verses* before my
 Text) are those *whose God is their Belly*, who mind
earthly things, ver. 19. By way of *contraries* there-
 fore, they whose Conversation is in *Heaven*, are
 those only who *mind*, (not who can *imagine* or
describe, but who *mind*,) that is, who in earnest
 attend to, as to their proper and most important
 Concern, the things which are in *Heaven*, Rom.
 viii. 5. *They that are after the Flesh*, do mind the
things of the Flesh; and *they that are after the Spi-*
rit, do mind the *things of the Spirit*. The mean-
 ing is; as *worldly* and corrupt Minds, are much
 more concerned about their *temporal*, than about
 their *eternal* Affairs; so, on the contrary, Per-
 sons *truly religious*, though they by no means ne-
 glect the Concerns of this present Life, yet they
 are really *more solicitous*, they are *more rejoiced* or
grieved, at the Prospect of their *eternal*, than of
 their *temporal* State. This is what St. Paul ex-
 horts us to, Col. iii. 1. *If ye be risen with Christ*,
seek those things which are above, where Christ sit-
teth on the Right Hand of God: *Set your Affections*
on things above, not on things upon Earth: *For ye*
are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God.
 Ye are dead; that is, ye are by your Profession
 in Baptism, dead with Christ; dead with Christ
 from the rudiments of the World; Buried with him
 by Baptism, into Death; dead, to all the vicious
 Desires, to all the sinful Enjoyments of the
 World.

World. *And your Life (says he) is bid with S E R M. Christ in God, that is, your Hope, (as it is expressed ch. i. 5) the Hope of eternal Life, is laid up for you in Heaven, with Christ our Saviour; laid up, reserved for you, in the determinate Counsel of God, against the day of retribution: At which Time, When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory. The only possible Means, by which we can in this sense fix our Affections, by which we can in this sense come to have our Conversation habitually in Heaven, is, that we take care, by works of Righteousness and true Holiness, by a Life of Virtue and real Goodness, to secure to ourselves an Interest and a Portion there. Lay not up, says our Saviour, Treasures upon Earth, but lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven; For where your Treasure is, there will your Heart be also, Matth. vi. 21. The words next following to these, are difficult to be understood; unless compared with these, by which their Sense and Connexion may be explained: ver. 22. The Light of the Body, says our Lord, is the Eye; if therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light; But if thine Eye be Evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darkness; If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is that Darkness! The meaning is: That True Judgment and Right Discernment of the Difference of things, by which Treasure in Heaven is more valued than Treasure upon Earth; the Rewards of Virtue, than the Pleasures*

SERMON
X.
W
sures of Sin; This true Judgment, I say, is to the State of the Soul, what the Eye is to the Guidance and Direction of the Body. If That which should be our Guide and our Rule, be itself dark, be itself fundamentally erroneous, how miserable must our Errors be!

3dly, HAVING our Conversation in Heaven, signifies in the last place, according to the most strict and proper Import of the word in the Original; having our Citizenship, our Home, our proper Country and Habitation there. The State of Heaven, the Happiness which God has promised in the Life to come, to those who shall qualify themselves for it by the Habits of Virtue here, is in Scripture represented under the description of a glorious City. Rev. xxi. 10. He shewed me that great City, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God; having the Glory of God, and so on. And even the Ancient Prophets, used from the beginning the same expressions; As appears in many passages of Isaiah: And Tobit xiii. 16. Jerusalem, saith he, shall be built up with Sapphires, and her Walls — with pure Gold. Of this new and heavenly Jerusalem, the Apostle describes the Patriarchs of old to have been Citizens, while their dwelling on Earth was but as in a foreign Country: Heb. xi. 9. By Faith, Abraham sojourned in the land of Promise, as in a strange Country; — For he looked for a City which hath Foundations. (in the original it is, he expected The City which hath The Foundation; that is

the Foundation of precious Stones, alluding to the **SER. M.**
 Prophetic expressions;) whose Builder and Maker **X.**
 is God. And ver. 13. *These all, that is, the Pa-*
triarchs, died in Faith, not having received the
Promises, but having seen them afar off; and were
persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed
that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth;
For they that say such things, declare plainly that
they seek a Country, even a — better Country,
that is, an heavenly; Wherefore God is not ashamed
to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them
a City. And All who imitate the Obedience of
 these Patriarchs, in all Ages and in all Nations
 of the World, by a Life of Virtue and true
 Goodness; are in like manner represented in
 Scripture, as being Members of the same hea-
 venly City. Eph. ii. 19. *Ye are no more Stran-*
gers and Foreigners, but Fellow-citizens with the
Saints, and of the household of God; and are built
upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets,
Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; In
whom all the Building fitly framed together, grow-
eth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In the pre-
 sent world, upon account of the transitoriness of
 This mortal life, we are styled Strangers and So-
 journers, 1 Chr. xxix. 15. and are exhorted, as ^{11.}
 Pilgrims, to pass the Time of our sojourning here
 in Fear, 1 Pet. i. 17. For here we have no conti-
 nuing City, but we seek One to come, Heb. xiii. 14.
 A city to come; that is, the New, the heavenly
 Jerusalem: For so St. Paul tells us, Gal. iv. 26.
 Jerusa-

SERM. *Jerusalem which is above, is the Mother of us all;*
 X. *that is, our proper Home and Country.* Heb.

xii. 22. *Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, To the general Assembly and Church of the first-born that are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of All, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant.* In pursuance of which elegant Description, virtuous and good men, raised and quickened together with Christ from the Death of Sin, are, by a lively figure, said to sit together (even Now) in heavenly places, in (or with) Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6. And to dwell in Heaven: Rev. xiii. 6. *he, (that is, Antichristian Tyranny) opened his mouth in Blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name and his Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. To blaspheme them that dwell in Heaven; that is, as 'tis explained in the following Verse, to make War with and overcome the Saints; to persecute the true Worshipers of God, whose Conversation is in Heaven.*

II. HAVING thus at large explained the Meaning of this Phrase, of having our Conversation in Heaven; it remains that I proceed, in the 2d place, to consider the Uses and Advantages which may arise to us therefrom. And

1st, IF we take the Phrase in Either of the Two former Senses, as signifying that we Meditate frequently upon the Heavenly State, or (which

is the natural consequence of delighting in such Meditation,) set our *Hearts and Affections* thereon; the Advantage and Benefit of so doing, is, that it will continually put us upon preparing and qualifying ourselves, by the Practice of Virtue, for the enjoyment of That Blessed State. *Ecclus. vii. 36. Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the End; and thou shalt never do amiss.* The Great reason, why the World is generally so vicious; is because men seldom meditate upon the final Consequences of Wickedness, and seldom seriously reflect upon the real State of their own Souls. They are like one, who, walking towards a Precipice, shuts his Eyes, and perceives not that there is Any Danger. Consideration, is the Eye of the Soul: And if this Light that is in us, be itself Darkness; if our Meditations be never fixt upon the things which can no otherwise be discerned but by serious and impartial Meditation, how great must the Darkness and Blindness of our Minds be! Men upon a Bed of Sickness, and at the Approach of Death, generally have very right Notions of this Matter; And since what will Then be True, we are sure cannot but be equally True Now; wise men will always endeavour, to fix those Thoughts upon their Minds by timely Attention, and make them useful at present; which hereafter will fix themselves upon the Mind, whether a man will or no, when perhaps it may be too late for them to be of Any Use to him. Considerate Christians wait continually

SERMON. ally for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor.

X.

i. 7. Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thus did the Apostles themselves; and to This did they continually exhort Others, as in the Text; Brethren, saith St. Paul, be Followers together of Me, and mark them which walk so as ye have Us for an example;—For Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

MORE particularly, Having our conversation in Heaven, as it signifies meditating upon the Presence and Attributes of God, will naturally be upon our Minds a strong Motive and a constant Assistance, to Purity and Holiness of Life. For if hereafter we shall therefore be like him, because we shall see him as he is; at present also in proportion we cannot but imitate him, if by serious Meditation we accustom ourselves to live as Seeing him who is invisible. And therefore St. John rightly infers, 1 John iii. 3. Every man that hath This Hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure.

AGAIN: Converſing in Heaven, as it signifies meditating on the Company by whom that region of Happiness is poſſeſt; an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of juſt men made perfect, living together in complete and uninterrupted Love; and Jeſus himſelf, the Mediator of the

New

New Covenant, who loved us and gave himself for S E R M.
us All: under *This View*, it cannot but be a X.
powerful Argument perpetually upon our Minds, 
to live *here* also, as preparative to That more
perfect State, in mutual Love, Forbearance, and
universal Charity.

Lastly, As it signifies meditating on the Great-
ness and Duration of the Happiness itself, which
we shall There enjoy; it is the great Security,
to preserve us from being overcome at any time
by the Temptations of worldly Prosperity, or by
the Fears of Temporal Adversity. I reckon, saith
St. Paul, that the Sufferings of this present world,
are not worthy to be compared with the glory which
shall be revealed in us. For which cause we faint
not; but though our outward man perish, yet the in-
ward man is renewed day by day. For our light
affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us
a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.
While we look not at the things which are seen, but
at the things which are not seen; for the things
which are seen, are temporal; but the things which
are not seen, are eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 16. By This
Faith, the Martyrs of old suffered themselves to be
tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might
obtain a better Resurrection, Heb. xi. 35. By
This Faith, Moses chose rather to suffer affliction
with the people of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures
of Sin for a Season; esteeming the reproach of Christ
greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt; for he

S E R M. *had respect unto the recompense of Reward,* ver. 25,

X. 26. And our Saviour himself, *ch. xii. 2. For the Joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.* But

2dly, AND to Conclude. If we understand the Phrase, *having our Conversation in Heaven*, to signify in the latter Sense (according to the most strict and proper Meaning of the words in the Original,) *having our Citizenship, our Home, our proper Country or Habitation in Heaven*, and consequently looking upon ourselves as *Members and Subjects of That City or Kingdom which is above*: If we consider it under *This View*, the obvious Inference from hence is, that then we ought constantly to endeavour to obey the *Laws of That Kingdom*, that is, the *Commandments of God*; lest if, during our Pilgrimage here in a *foreign Country*, we live contrary to the *Laws of Heaven*, we be hereafter rejected at our return, and refused admittance into our *own City*. *Rev. xxii. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in thro' the Gates into the City; For without, are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers and murderers and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie. For there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth; neither whatsoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie.* And the same

same thing is expressed by our Saviour in the S E R M.
 Gospel, *Luke xiii. 26.* When ye begin to say, X.
Lord, open unto us; for—we have eaten and
drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our
Streets; he shall say, I know you not whence ye are;
depart from me, all ye Workers of Iniquity. The
 Laws of our heavenly Country, and the Customs of
 a vitious World, are contrary to each other. *Rom.*
vii. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the in-*
ward man; but I see another Law in my Members,
warring against the Law of my mind: For the Flesh
lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the
Flesh; and These are contrary the One to the Other,
Gal. v. 17. This being the Case; it follows
 therefore, as *St. James* concludes, *ch. iv. 4.* that
whosoever will be a Friend of the World, of the
sinful and debauched, of the vitious and corrupt
World, must needs be an Enemy of God: Because
the Carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not
subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be,
Rom. viii. 7. For This reason, the Apostle
beseeches us, as being Strangers and Pilgrims here,
to abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against the
Soul; that is, which unfit us for our heavenly
Country, the habitation of everlasting Righte-
ousness and Peace, 1 Pet. ii. 11: and exhorts us,
not to be conformed to This World, Rom. xii. 2.
but to be transformed by the renewing of our Mind;
that is, to press forward towards the Mark of the
Prize of our High Calling, forgetting those things
which are behind: After the example of the Pa-

S E R M. triarchs, Heb. xi. 15. who truly if they had been
 X. mindful of That Country from whence they came out,
 they might have had opportunity to have returned;
 But now they desire a better Country, that is, an
 Heavenly. Where, if We also have our conver-
 sation Now, we shall together with them be glo-
 rified likewise Hereafter.

S E R.

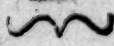
S E R M O N XI.

Of the Spiritual Nature of the Gospel.

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]

2 COR. iii. 17, 18.

Now the Lord is That Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty: But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

THE Holy Ghost having been poured forth S E R M.
upon the Apostles at Pentecost in so very XI.
singular and plentiful a manner, as that, 
before that time, 'tis said, comparatively, not to have been given at all, John vii. 39; and Those who were not yet acquainted with That day's Miracle, are represented as not having heard so much as whether there was any Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 2. that is, whether there had yet been any

S E R M. such *plentiful Effusion* of it, as the Prophets had foretold: For this reason, St. Paul in the 8th verse of this chapter, whereof my Text is the Conclusion, elegantly styles *the Gospel*, by way of Eminence, the *Ministration of the Spirit*. And from That consideration, through the *whole* chapter, he magnifies the *Doctrine of Christ*, as being more clear and plain, more powerful and efficacious, more illustrious and glorious, than the *Law of Moses*. Ver. 3. *Ye are*, saith he, *the epistle of Christ, ministered by Us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart*: His meaning is, The Power and Efficacy of the *Gospel*, is as much greater than that of the *Law*, as can be expressed by *comparing* that which is written in a *Book*, with that which is imprinted inwardly in the very *Heart and Soul itself*. The same Argument he pursues, ver. 6. *God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life*; That is, the *Gospel* gives us those *spiritual* precepts, whereof the *legal Ordinances* were but *types and shadows*; (that is the meaning of their being called the *letter* or *dead letter*;) and teaches us the way to *eternal life*, whereas the rigour of the *Law* could end only in *mens condemnation*. And from hence he proceeds to *magnify* the glorious manifestation of the *Gospel*, by *comparing* it with the *Glory*, that shined in *Moses's* countenance; which, though so bright that

that the children of Israel could not stedfastly be- SERM.
hold it, it was but temporary and transient, and XI.
only a type or figure of that permanent glory of
the Gospel, which was to continue for ever ;
ver. 7. *If the ministration of Death, written and
engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children
of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses
for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to
be done away ; How shall not the ministration of the
Spirit be rather glorious ? For if the ministration
of condemnation be glory, much more doth the mini-
stration of righteousness, (of justification, it should
be rendred,) exceed in glory ; — For if that which
is done away was glorious, much more that which
remaineth (that which is Perpetual) is glorious.*
And hereupon he takes occasion elegantly to de-
scribe the Blindness of the Jews after our Saviour's
time, in not seeing through the types and figures
and imperfect notices of the Old Testament ; he
describes it elegantly by comparing it to the *Veil*
which *Moses* put upon his Face to conceal the
Brightness of it ; Ver. 14. *Their Minds* (saith
he) *were blinded ; For until this day remaineth the
same Veil untaken away, in the reading of the Old
Testament ; which Veil is done away in Christ : But
even unto this day, when Moses is read, the Veil is
upon their Heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn
to the Lord, (that is, when they shall believe in
Christ,) the Veil shall be taken away.* And then
he sums up and concludes his whole Discourse, in
the words of the Text : *Now the Lord* (says he)
is

SERM. is *that Spirit*; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty: but We All with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The words are in themselves somewhat difficult, and have in them several phrases very different from our present manner of expressing things: But the general design of them appears in some measure, from the brief explication now given of the foregoing part of the chapter, whereby they are introduced; and I shall now proceed to explain them more particularly, by considering distinctly the several expressions in the Order they lie.

THE Lord, says the Apostle, is *That Spirit*. That is, *Christ*, the Gospel or Doctrine of Christ, is *That Spirit* I have been speaking of in this whole Discourse; That Spirit or end and design of the Law, which giveth life, or shows men the way to justification; in opposition to the dead letter and to the rigour of the law, which leads only to condemnation: That Spirit or final intent of the law, which is to continue for ever; in opposition to those mere types and shadows, which were soon to be done away: That Spirit or full Meaning and Signification of the law, which is opposed to the Veil of Ignorance and partial understanding of it.

THE Lord, is *that Spirit*, The word, *Lord*, is used here to signify the Gospel or Doctrine of Christ, by the same figure of speaking, as St. Paul elsewhere uses, when he advises Christians to marry only in

the Lord, that is, to *Christians*, to such only as S E R M.
 have *received the Gospel*; and when he speaks of XI.
the dead in Christ, i. e. of those who died in the
 profession and practice of the true Religion; and
 commands us to *put on Christ*, i. e. to obey his
 Doctrine.

THE phrase, *That Spirit*, is made use of to
 signify the *True Meaning* and *final Intent* of the
 Law; because the opposite words, *Flesh* and *Let-*
ter, signify on the contrary the mere *Shadow* or
Appearance of a thing, without the *real Substance*
 and *true Intention*. Thus *John* vi. 63. *It is the*
Spirit, saith our Saviour, *that quickeneth, the*
Flesh profiteth nothing; *The words that I speak un-*
to you, they are Spirit and they are Life. Again,
 ver. 6. of this chapter in which the Text is, *A-*
ble ministers of the New Testament, not of the Letter,
but of the Spirit; And *Rom.* vii. 6. *That we should*
serve in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of
the Letter; The meaning of which is explained,
 ch. ii. 29. *He is a Jew, which is one inwardly,*
and circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit,
and not in the Letter, whose praise is not of Men,
but of God. As therefore the law of *Moses*, upon
 account of its many ritual observances, is by a
 very significant Figure, in several places of *St.*
Paul's epistles, called *Flesh*; so here on the con-
 trary, concerning the *Gospel* of *Christ*, which was
 the End of those types, 'tis with no less propriety
 and significancy affirmed, that *the Lord is that*
Spirit.

SERMON. IT follows, *And where the Spirit of the Lord is,*

XI. *there is Liberty: Liberty, in the first place, from the Veil of ignorance and obscurity, which remained upon the Hearts, and perplexed the Understandings of the unbelieving Jews, when the Old Testament was read to them: In opposition to which, the Apostle argues, ver. 12. of this chapter, that We use great plainness of Speech, and not as Moses who put a Veil over his Face; And upon this account he styles the Gospel, the Manifestation of the Truth, ch. iv. 2. and the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, Eph. i. 17.*

THEN, in the next place, *Liberty* from the bondage of that yoke of Ceremonies, *which neither our Fathers nor We, says St. Peter, were able to bear, Acts x. 15. Concerning which numerous and burdensome rites, St. Paul also is to be understood, when he rejoices that we are now delivered from the law, Rom. vii. 6. and compares the Jews, who were under these legal Obligations, to Servants or to Children yet under Age, Gal. iv. 3. and exhorts those, who by embracing the Gospel were discharged from that Law, to stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be intangled again with the yoke of bondage, ch. v. 1. Which liberty nevertheless, lest any man should so misinterpret, as to think himself discharged thereby from moral as well as ritual Obligations, (which is the absurd Use Some in modern times have made of these Texts,) he takes care to add a very express caution,*

tion, ver. 13. *Brethren, ye have indeed been called* S E R M.
unto Liberty; only use not Liberty for an occasion to X I.
the Flesh: That is; Do not, under pretence of
 being set free from the *Mosaic Observations*, run
 into *immoralities*, which are Breaches of God's
 everlasting Law; And St. Peter in like manner,
 1 Pet. ii. 16. *As free, yet not using your Liberty*
for a cloke of maliciousness, (or, as an Excuse for
Immoralities,) but as the Servants of God.

ADD to This, that by the *Liberty* which the
 Text affirms is always *There, where is the Spirit*
of the Lord, i. e. wherever the Gospel prevails in
 Faith and Practice; is meant also a Liberty from
 that *Fear and Terror*, which under the Law,
 could not but make men (as the Apostle to the
Hebrews expresses it) *all their life-time subject to*
bondage; till they were assured of Pardon by the
 reconciliation of Christ, for such things from which
 they could not be justified by the law of Moses. In
 This Sense it is, that St. James uses the word,
 when he styles the Gospel *the perfect Law of Liber-*
ty, James i. 25. And by This is easy to be un-
 derstood That otherwise difficult expression of St.
 Paul, Rom. viii. 15. *Ye have not received the*
Spirit of bondage again to Fear, but ye have received
the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Fa-
ther; The meaning is, we have Now, through
 the reconciliation of Christ, free Access to God,
 not as Servants to a strict Master, but as Sons to
 a merciful and compassionate Father. Which
 reconciliation itself, ought nevertheless to be al-
 ways

S E R M. ways carefully so understood, not as if God was
 XI. in Himself severe and cruel *before* the interposition
 of Christ; but that God, of his own original and
 eternal Goodness, freely provided for us that re-
 conciliation *through* Christ, which his infinite
 Wisdom judged to be the properest Method of
 extending his Compassion to us.

Lastly, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is*
 Liberty; not only from the Terroure of *past* Sins,
 thro' the Redemption of Christ; but also Liber-
 ty from the *Power and Dominion* of Sin for the
 time to come, through the assistance of his Spirit.
 In This sense our Saviour uses the word, St. John
 viii. 36. *If the Son* (says he) *shall make you free,*
ye shall be free indeed; free, in opposition to what
 is expressed in the 34th verse, *Servants of Sin.*
 St. Paul in like manner, Rom. viii. 2. *The Law*
of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me
free from the Law of Sin and Death; free, from
 the Slavery and Dominion of Wickedness; *deli-*
vered from the bondage of corruption, into the glo-
rious liberty of the children of God.

T H E words next following in the Text, *But*
we all with open Face, are not to be understood by
 way of *opposition* to what went before; For *That*
 takes away the Clearness of the Sense: But the
 Connexion is, by way of explication of, or In-
 ference from, the words immediately foregoing:
Where the Spirit of the Lord is, where the Gospel
 prevails effectually, *There is Liberty;* And *We*
all, or, And therefore we all, all true Christians,

do with open Face, not thro' an obscure Veil as the S E R M.
Jews, but with open face behold the glory of the Lord. XL

THE Phrase, *with open Face*, signifies as much as, *clearly, plainly, and distinctly*; not in types and shadows, not in obscure glimpses and faint representations, not in remote hints and distant prospects; but with a full and direct view, and immediate intuition as of the Substance and reality of things present and actually before us. We behold the Mystery of God in Christ, not as the children of Israel saw the brightness of Moses's countenance thro' the Veil, (which is what the Apostle here alludes to;) but with open face, as Moses himself is described to have seen the Lord: *Exod. xxxiii. 11. The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his Friend: And Num. xii. 8. With Him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall be behold.* Thus to Us Christians, the Mystery of God's reconciliation to Sinners by the Method of the Gospel, the Riches of the glory of this mystery (as St. Paul styles it,) *Col. i. 27. even the mystery which had been hid from Ages and from Generations; is now made plain and manifest: so plain and open, as to be called by way of Eminence, 2 Cor. iv. 2. The Manifestation of the Truth.*

WE all, *with open Face*, beholding the Glory of the Lord: That these words, the *Glory of the Lord*, are to be understood, not in the literal, but in

SER M. in a figurative sense, to signify the *clear and glorious manifestation of the Will of God by the Gospel*, is evident, as from the whole connexion of the Apostle's discourse in *this* place, so from the many other passages of Scripture, wherein the Gospel is stiled in like manner *the riches of God's Glory*, Rom. ix. 23. *the riches of the Glory of this mystery*, Col. i. 27. *the Glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, John i. 14. *the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. and ver. 6. *the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, shining in our Heart*. The words of that whole verse, are very remarkable; *God, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness*, (that is, who manifested his Glory originally in the first Creation of Things,) *the same God hath shined in our hearts*, (has manifested his Glory the second time no less conspicuously in our redemption;) *hath shined in our hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ*. And these two last expressions, *Christ's being the Image of God*; and *the Light of the Knowledge of God's Glory, shining upon us in the Face (or in the Person) of Christ*; open to us the Ground and Meaning, of that *Similitude* the Apostle interposes in this part of the Text.

Beholding, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord. That which he hereby intended to express, is, that in *Christ, who is the Image of the invisible God*, and the *Great Revealer of his Will*, we clearly and plainly

plainly behold the whole pleasure of God towards us. For, the Father, no man hath seen at any time; no man hath seen, nor can see; but the only-begotten Son, which is in his Bosom, He has declared him; and has declared him so plainly, that he who has seen me, saith our Saviour, has seen the Father, *John* xiv. 9. There is a phrase, very like to This in the Text, used in a contrary sense by the same Apostle, in his former Epistle to the Corinthians, ch. xiii. 12. Now (says he) we see through a glass darkly, but Then face to face. In which passage, seeing through a glass, signifies seeing darkly or obscurely, in opposition to beholding plainly face to face: But here in the Text, the phrase signifies, on the contrary, seeing clearly or plainly; and is the very same as, beholding face to face: We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the Glory of the Lord. The words in the Original, are in Both places more expressive, than in the Translation; and show plainly the Reason of this different Signification. In one place, the word, which we render, glass, signifies a perspective-glass; which brings distant things into the reach indeed of our Sight, but still very obscurely, imperfectly and indistinctly; and does therefore very aptly and by a most proper similitude, express That View of a future state, which we have by Faith and not by Sight. But now in This other passage in the Text, the word which we render, glass, signifies a Mirrour or Looking glass, which on the contrary represents things plainly and distinctly,

SER. M. *livingly, face to face*; and therefore it no less aptly
 XI. represents that clear *Light of the Knowledge of the*
Glory and Will of God, which shines to us (saith
 the Apostle) *in the Face of Jesus Christ. We all,*
with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of
the Lord.

It follows, *Are changed into the same Image*.
 The meaning is, As Christ is, by nature, the
 perfect *Image of God*; so *We*, by communica-
 tion of *Light and Knowledge* from him, and by
 the practice of *Righteousness* and true *Holiness*, in
 Obedience to him and Imitation of him, are
 transformed into the same *Image*. As Christ is,
 by nature, the *Son of God*; so *We*, by *Adoption*
 and by the *Fruits of his Spirit dwelling in us*, have
 this *Love bestowed upon us*, that *We* also, should be
 called the *Sons of God*. For of his *fulness have we*
all received, and grace for grace, John i. 16. That
 is, Through the *Fulness* of those Divine Perfec-
 tions, and of that *Grace* which was conferred
 upon Him without measure; God has commu-
 nicated to Us a *proportionable Fulness of Divine*
Knowledge and Virtue, according to our capa-
 cities; and *Grace*, that is, *Mercy and Favour*,
 according to the *measure of the Gift of Christ*.

BUT more particularly; Being *changed into*
the same Image with Christ, signifies Two things;
 First, being made like to him in *Holiness here*;
 and Secondly, being made like him in *Glory here-*
after. First, being *changed into the same Image*
with Christ, signifies, being made like to him in

VI Holiness

Holiness here. The Image of God in the mind of S E R M.
Man, is Virtue and true Righteousness; and there- X I.
fore, when the Scripture speaks of mens reform-
ing from Vice, or improving in Virtue; 'tis a
very lively description of the Excellency of their
State, to express it by their being transformed
into the Image of God, or being made after his
Similitude or Likeness. Thus the Psalmist, *As*
for Me, saith he, I will behold thy presence in
righteousness; and when I awake up after thy
Likeness, I shall be satisfied with it, Ps. xvii. 16.
And the Apostle St. Paul, Rom. viii. 29. *Whom*
he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be con-
formed to the Image of his Son, that he might be
the first-born among many brethren. That God's
predestinating men to be conformed to the Image of
his Son, does not here signify, decreeing con-
cerning the Persons, what they necessarily should
do; but decreeing concerning the conditions, what
he would have them do; is evident from the
parallel place, Eph. ii. 10. where the same Apo-
stle tells us, that it was, not the persons, but the
good works, which God before ordained, *that we*
should walk in them. Again, Eph. iv. 23. Ex-
horting men to the practice of Virtue, he *Thus*
expresses himself; Be ye renewed (says he) in the
Spirit of your Mind — after God, (after the
example and similitude of God,) — in righte-
ousness and true Holiness; After the Image of Him
that created you; as 'tis, Col. iii. 10. Trans-
O 2 formed

SERMON formed by the renewing of your Mind; as he expresses it, *Rom. xii. 2.*

XI.

OUR Saviour himself in his Prayer, delivering the same Notion, speaks after the following manner, *John xvii. 22. The Glory which thou gavest Me, I have given Them, that They may be One even as We are One: His Meaning is the same as That in the Text, We beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, (the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as 'tis explained immediately after,) are changed into the same Image, are made partakers of his Glory, are made (as St Paul elsewhere speaks) the righteousness of God in Him. This is the first signification of the phrase, our being made like to Christ in works of righteousness here.*

2dly, BEING changed into the same Image with Christ, signifies also being made like him in Glory hereafter. Thus *1 Cor. xv. 49. As we have born the Image of the Earthly, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly: For, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall We also* *Col. iii. 4. appear with him in glory: And He shall change this our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to that mighty* *Phil. iii. 21. working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* St John adds another particular reason, why we shall in this sense be changed into the same Image with Christ; *1 John iii. 2. We*
know,

know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like S E R M. him; For, says he, we shall see him as he is: The XI. words are a perfect Explication of those in the Text; *We all with open face beholding the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image.*

THE Next expression, *from Glory to Glory*, may be understood to signify the manner of Communication of *Christ's* Glory to *Us*, whether in the way of *Righteousness* here, or of *Happiness* hereafter. *We beholding the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image* from *Glory to Glory*; that is, by Communication of *Glory* to *Us*, from *His Glory*: According to that Expression of our Saviour, beforecited, *John xvii. 22.* *The Glory which thou gavest Me, I have given Them*; and that of the Evangelist, *Of his Fulness have we all received Fulness, and Grace for (or from) His Grace.*

BUT the more natural and obvious Meaning of the Words, *from Glory to Glory*, is, from one degree of *Glory* to another: *We are changed into the same Image* from *Glory to Glory*: That is, from our Likeness to *Christ* in works of *Righteousness* and true Holiness here, we shall improve and go forward unto a further and more glorious Likeness to him in the Injoyment of eternal Happiness hereafter. And This is the more probable to be the true Sense of the words, because 'tis the Nature or Idiom of the Jewish language, to express any improvement in degree, by a repetition of the same word. Thus *Pf.*

SER M. LXXXIV. 7. *They shall go from strength to strength;*

XI. that is, from one degree of strength to another: And *Rom. i. 17. In the Gospel, the Righteousness of God, (or the Mercy of God,) is revealed from Faith to Faith; that is, from one degree of Faith to another; from one degree of Clearness of revelation, to another; from a less clear dispensation under the Law, to a clearer one under the Gospel. And Thus therefore in the Text likewise, from Glory to Glory, may well be understood to signify, from one degree of Glory to another; from a less degree here, to a greater and more perfect degree hereafter.*

Lastly, THE Apostle concludes the Whole, with the addition of these words, *even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* The meaning of which is, that all these things he had hitherto been discoursing upon, were accomplished in such a manner, in so wise, so effectual, so glorious a manner, as became the Dignity of the Great Agent, and were worthy the Operation of the Spirit of God. The clear Revealing the Gospel, to be the Spirit and End of the Law: The Liberty procured men by this merciful Dispensation, from the Burden and from the Terrour of the Law; from the Guilt of past Sin by Pardon, which is *Justification*; and from the Dominion of Sin for the time to come, which is *Sanctification*: The full and distinct Manifestation of the glorious Purpose of God in Christ, of bringing men through him to everlasting Salvation: The

Com-

Communication of this Glory of Christ to Us, by SERM.
 our being conformed to his Image in Righteousness XI.
 here, and in Glory hereafter: All these, are the
 Fruits of that One and the same Spirit, which
 worketh all in all, and distributeth Gifts to every
 man severally according to the Will of God: That
 Spirit, which inspired the Predictions of the
 Prophets, which worked Miracles by the Apo-
 stles, which spread the Gospel by the Gift of
 Tongues, which rejoices when Men embrace
 the Doctrine of Christ, and assists them in prac-
 tising it, and supports them in suffering for it,
 and brings them finally unto Glory by it. As
 St. Paul excellently argues, *Rom. viii. 10, 11.*
If Christ be in you, the Body is dead, because of Sin;
but the Spirit is Life, because of Righteousness:
And if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from
the Dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ
from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies,
by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

THE Application of what has been said, is;
 First, from the true Explication of these words,
The Lord is That Spirit, we may take occasion
 to observe, that in all other places likewise of
 St. Paul's epistles, where the word, *Spirit*, is op-
 posed to, *The Letter or the Dead letter*, to *Flesh*
 or *carnal Ordinances*; it always signifies the
 Gospel, or the spiritual and moral Precepts of
 Christ, in opposition to the Ceremonies of the
 Law of Moses. Which Observation is of great
 Use, against those who would make Religion to
 consist,

S E R M. consist, not in the Practice of Virtue and true
 XI. Righteousness, but in unintelligible mystical
 and enthusiastic Notions.

Secondly, From the right understanding of these next words, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; we may learn the true interpretation of those many passages, wherein the Apostle contends earnestly for the *Liberty* of Christians, or for their being *free from the Law*. In all which places, his Meaning is not, (as some in Modern times have most unreasonably argued,) that Christians are discharged from any part of the Obligation of the *moral Law*, or that the Gospel-dispensation (as some Enthusiasts have imagined, sets men *above* the confinements of common Morality: But his plain Meaning is This only; that by the abolition of *Ceremonies*, we are discharged from the *Burden* of the Law; By the *Pardon* declared in Christ to Penitents, we are delivered from the *Terrour and Severity* of the Law; and by the Assistance of his *Grace* we are made, not *free to Sin*, but *free from Sin*, for the time to come.

Thirdly, If we now *with open face behold the Glory of the Lord*, i. e. understand his Will *clearly and distinctly*, not in types and shadows; then ought we above all things to endeavour to walk as *children of Light*, as becometh those who have such *clear Knowledge* of their Duty, in all Holiness and righteous Conversation.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, If by *this Means* we are *changed in* **SERM.**
to the same Image, from Glory to Glory, i. e. from **XI.**
 a Likeness with Christ here, to a Likeness with
 him hereafter; then ought we always to remem-
 ber, that by no other way can we arrive at a
 conformity with Christ in *Glory*, but by a con-
 formity with him first in *Righteousness and true*
Holiness.

Lastly, If all this be worked in us *as by the*
Spirit of the Lord; if all these Benefits be the
 Operation of that One and the same Spirit,
 which always works with us in proportion to
 our own Endeavours, and will not dwell in a
 Soul that is polluted with Sin: Then ought we
 above all things to take heed, lest by any vici-
 ous practice we quench and grieve this good
 Spirit of God, and drive him from us, and
 thereby be found to have done despite unto the
 Spirit of Grace.

S E R M O N XII.

Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]

MATTH. xii. 31, 32.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men: And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this World, neither in the World to come.

SERM.
XII.

WE are met together This day, thankfully to commemorate the greatest and most important Gift, that was ever sent down from Heaven upon the Sons of Men; the Gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost; that plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit, which ~~was the~~ Accomplishment both of the Predictions of all the *Antient* Prophets, and of all the *later* Promises,

Promises made by our Saviour to his Disciples; S E R M.
that Gift of Tongues, which was so peculiarly XII.
proper and necessary a *Means* to the great End
for which it was designed, and the *Effects* where-
of have been of such universal Extent over the
Face of the whole Earth. The Gospel of *Christ*,
was not, like the Religion of *Moses*, to be con-
fined to One Nation or People; but to be
preached, as the general Doctrine of Salvation,
to All Mankind: And the Gift of Tongues,
wherewith the first Preachers of it were indued,
was equally both a *necessary Means* to enable them
to preach to all Nations, and a *strong Proof* of
the Truth of that Doctrine which they were so
miraculously inabled to spread. 'Twas a *necef-*
sary Means, without which the Gospel could by
no labour whatsoever; no, not by the most in-
defatigable Industry, in compassing Sea and
Land to make a Profelyte; have in the Course
of *many Ages* been propagated through so many
different and so remote Countries, as by This
means it was spread in the space of *not many years*.
And at the same Time that it so *swiftly* conveyed
the *Knowledge* of the Gospel, 'twas likewise a *strong*
Proof of the *Truth* of the Doctrine itself, both
upon account of the *Greatness* of the Miracle in
its own Nature, and the *Clearness* of the Evidence
wherewith the Miracle was set forth. The *Great-*
ness of the Miracle in its own Nature, consisted
in This; that it was worked upon *many Persons*,
at one and the same time; that it was a producing
in

SERMON in them such an Effect, as was equivalent to the

XII. Result of a *long Habit*; and that it was not a short and transitory Effect, but of a *permanent Duration*; and, in its *whole Continuance*, equally miraculous, as in the first Operation. Upon the whole, therefore, 'twas such a Miracle in all its Circumstances, as there had been no Example of any like it before; and probably referred to by our Saviour in that Promise; *John xiv. 12*; *He that believeth on me; the work that I do, shall he do also, and greater Works than these shall he do.* The *Clearness of the Evidence* wherewith the Miracle was set forth, consisted in This; that Matters were so disposed by the Wisdom of Providence, that the bitterest Enemies of the Apostles, did themselves, by their own Testimony, remove the only Objections that could be brought against it. For, all that could possibly be alledged against the Truth of the Miracle, was, either that the New Tongues wherewith the Apostles began to speak, were *not real languages*; or, if they were, that then the Apostles, who spake them, had *studied* and been *taught* those *Languages* before. But now the former of these Suspicions, was removed by the *Strangers* then present; and the latter was taken off, by the *Inhabitants of Jerusalem* themselves. The *Strangers* then present, who understood the Languages, took off that foolish Objection, *Acts ii. 13*; that the Apostles were *full of new Wine*; for they *heard* and understood them *speaking in their*

their own Tongues, the wonderful Works of God; SERM.
 ver. 11. And the Inhabitants of Jerusalem them- XII.
 selves, removed the other Suspicion of their hav-
 ing been taught the Languages; for they knew
 them to be illiterate men, and said, *Are not all*
these, that speak, Galileans? ver. 7; just as they
 had formerly said concerning Jesus himself;
How knoweth this man letters, having never learn-
ed? John vii. 14: And, *whence has this man*
these things? — *Is not this the Carpenter, and*
Son of Mary? the Brother of James and Joses and
Juda and Simon? and are not his Sisters here with
us? St. Mark vi. 2. Both the Strangers there-
 fore, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem themselves,
 bore Testimony to the Truth of the Miracle,
 even at the same Time and with the same Argu-
 ments by which they opposed it; and they were
 of all Others the *best* and *most competent* Wit-
 nesses, for that *very* Reason, because they were
prejudiced against the Thing, and *Enemies* to the
Men. Besides all which, the Miracle itself (as
 I before observed) was *permanent* in its Continu-
 ance, as well as *publick* in the manner of its being
 worked: So that in all respects, it was both the
Greatest in the Nature of the Thing itself, and the
Clearest in the Evidence of its being *really per-*
formed; that can possibly be imagined. To Us,
 indeed, who live at This Distance of Time, the
 Evidence of a Fact done so many Ages since,
 cannot be so perfectly and entirely clear, as to
 those who were themselves Eye-Witnesses and
 Ear-

S E R M. Ear-Witnesses of it. But if there *are* Matters
 XII. of Fact so attested, even at much *greater* Di-
 stances of Time, as that no reasonable Person
 can in the least question the Truth of them;
 and *This*, of all Other distant Facts that are re-
 corded in any History, has the greatest and most
 remarkable Attestations; the Evidence of it,
 even to *Us*, can with as little Reason be rejected,
 as that which was offered to those very Persons
 who lived at the Time. Nay, in *some* respects,
 we may seem even to have the *Advantage* over
 them, in Point of Certainty of our not being de-
 ceived. For, besides that we are *Now* free,
 from many of those inveterate Prejudices, which
 both *Jews* and *Gentiles* then laboured under;
 and which we cannot assure ourselves we should
 less obstinately have adhered to, than They did;
 We have moreover, what They at that Time
 could not have; We have the concurrent *Exa-*
mination of many *Ages*, and the Advantage of
 considering and comparing the *Objections* of *Ad-*
versaries on all Sides; We have the *additional*
Proofs, arising from the *continued Effects* of this
 miraculous Power, in different Times and Pla-
 ces; We have seen the Truth of the Apostles
 Doctrine confirmed, by the accomplishment of
 several Prophecies; by the Destruction of *Jeru-*
salem; by the final scattering of the whole Na-
 tion of the *Jews*; by the incredible Success,
 and universal Propagation of the Gospel over
 all the World.

Now

Now These *additional* Confirmations, of the *S E R M.*
 Truth of the Doctrine delivered by the Holy *XIII*
 Ghost in the Revelation of the Gospel, are to
Us; (what the Strength of the Evidence arising
 from the Nearness of the Time, was to *Them*
 who lived in the first Ages;) a proportionable
Aggravation of the Guilt of Unbelief, in those
 who, notwithstanding all reasonable Proof, yet
 obstinately reject the Counsel of God against
 Themselves, by *disbelieving* or (which is the
 same thing) *disobeying* the Gospel. For the Sin
 of Unbelief, does not consist in *not believing*
 what men have *no* sufficient Reason to believe;
 but in refusing to attend to reasonable Evi-
 dence; in being unwilling to examine into a Doc-
 trine, which would oblige them to amend their
 Lives; in *hating the Light*, and fearing to come
 into it, *lest their Deeds should be reprov'd* thereby.
This is the Condemnation, saith our Saviour, *that*
Light is come into the World, and men loved Dark-
ness rather than Light, because their Deeds were
evil; John iii. 19. *They are of those* (as Job ele-
 gantly expresses it) *who rebel against the Light*;
they know not the Ways thereof, nor abide in the
Paths thereof; ch. xxiv. 13. Upon *this* Ac-
 count; (that Knowledge, or, which is all one,)
 the Means of Knowledge fairly proposed to men,
 is the great Aggravation of the Sin of Unbelief;
 shewing plainly, that in such Case nothing but
 Obstinacy and the Love of Sin, is the real Cause
 of their rejecting the Truth: Upon this Account,
 I say,

SERMON. I say, it is, that our Saviour thus declares concerning the Jews, St. John xv. 22; *If I had not come, and spoke unto them, they had not had Sin: but now they have no cloke for their Sin: and ver.* 24; *If I had not done among them the Works which none other man did, they had not had Sin; but now they have both seen and hated, both me and my Father. And to the Cities, wherein most of his mighty Works were done; Matth. xi. 21; Wo unto thee, Chorazin; Wo unto thee, Bethsaida; For if the mighty Works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in Sackcloth and Ashes: But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell; For if the mighty Works which have been done in Thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this Day; But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you. And upon the same Ground it is, that the Apostle in like manner so highly aggravates the Sin of rejecting the Gospel; Heb. xiii. 25; See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: For if They escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth; much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven. And ch. ii. 2; If the Word spoken by Angels, was stedfast; and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape,*

if

if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first S E R M.
 began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed XII.
 unto us by them that heard him: God also bearing
 them witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and
 with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,
 according to his own Will. A careful Considera-
 tion of the Sense of these Passages, will lead us
 to the true meaning of the like, but more diffi-
 cult, and seemingly more severe Expressions in
 the Text. For, if the great Aggravation of Sin,
 be the Knowledge of our Duty; and the Condemna-
 tion of the World, be the Light that is come into
 it; and the Guilt of the Jews was proportionably
 greater than that of other men, for this reason,
 because our Saviour did among them the Works
 which no other man did elsewhere; and those par-
 ticular Cities of the Jews, wherein most of our
 Lord's mighty Works were done, were condemned
 with a more particularly severe judgment; and
 in general, every Sin against the Word spoken by
 our Lord himself from Heaven, and confirmed
 with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Mi-
 racles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, can less expect
 to escape unpunished, than those committed
 against the Law given by Angels and delivered
 by Moses upon Earth: It follows, that if there
 be Any Sin, more heinous than All others; if
 there be Any Guilt, which in Event will termi-
 nate in final Perdition; if there be any Crime,
 of which it may beforehand be judged that it
 will never be expiated; it must be Mens obsti-
 nately

SERMON. nately sinning against That Light, a greater and clearer than which, will never be afforded them; it must be mens hardening themselves in such a Disposition, as in the Nature of the Thing cuts off from itself the Means of Recovery; it must be such a Corruption and Depravity of Mind, as, like a Mortal and incurable Disease, precludes all Methods of applying a Remedy. And This, it is evident, cannot be any *particular* Sin, but a *general and total* Rejection of the only Means of recovering from Sin. The Generation that lived at the Time of the Flood, sinned unpardonably; not by any of the *particular* Crimes they were guilty of; but by rejecting the preaching of Righteous *Noah*, which was the last Call God vouchsafed them to Repentance: For he resolved, that whosoever blasphemed the preaching of *Noah*, should never be forgiven, but be destroyed by the Flood. The Inhabitants of *Sodom* sinned unpardonably; not by any of their *particular* Wickednesses, which yet were extremely heinous; but by refusing to hear *Lot's* Exhortations to Repentance; who was the last Monitor God intended to send them; and he determined judicially, that whosoever blasphemed the preaching of *Lot*, it should never be forgiven him, but he should be destroyed in the Desolation by Fire. The Pharisees in our Saviour's Time, sinned likewise unpardonably; not by any of the *particular* Iniquities,

ries, with which they are charged in the Gospel; S E R M.
 (For the whole *Design* of our Lord's preaching, XII.
 was to exhort them to *repent* of these, that they might be forgiven :) But they sinned unpardonably, by opprobriously rejecting our Lord's Invitation to repentance; and by scornfully reviling the greatest and the last Miracles, which he intended to work in that Place amongst them; And therefore, after This, God resolved to leave them to themselves, to live and die in their Sins without further conviction, and never to be forgiven, or to have any New Means of Pardon offered them, *either in this World or in the World to come.* Verily I say unto you, *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men: And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this World neither in the World to come.* The Words are the severest words in the whole New Testament; and therefore ought very carefully to be considered and explained, in their true and proper meaning; that neither melancholy pious persons may, on the one hand, be terrified with Fears of what they have not the least reason to apply to themselves; nor wilful and incorrigible Sinners, presumptuously imagine themselves to be in less danger than they really are.

SER.M. THE Occasion of the Words, was This. Our
 XII. Saviour having cast out a Devil, and healed the
 diseased person, so that he who had been dumb
 and blind, immediately both spake and saw ;
 the People, astonished at the greatness of the
 Miracle, began to express their opinion, that he
 must needs be the Messias, *ver. 23* : Upon
 which, certain Pharisees, hardened by their Ma-
 lice and Hypocrisy beyond all Conviction, sug-
 gested to the People, that possibly it might be
 by Confederacy with the Prince of the Devils,
 that Jesus thus cast out Devils ; *ver. 24*. To
 This our Saviour replies, Whatever is done by
 Confederacy with evil Spirits, must be something
 that promotes the *Interest* of the Kingdom of
 Satan, and not any thing directly *contrary* there-
 to ; unless a Kingdom can be supported by Di-
 visions within itself ; *ver. 25* : *Every Kingdom di-*
vided against itself, is brought to Desolation ; and
every City or House divided against itself, shall not
stand. If therefore casting out Devils, and that
 in Proof of a Doctrine directly *opposite* to the *In-*
terest of the Kingdom of Satan, be a thing not
 to be done by Confederacy with Evil Spirits ;
 then nothing, says he, can be more absurdly
 malicious, than this your Accusation of me ; *ver.*
26 ; *If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against*
himself ; how then shall his Kingdom stand ? But if
 the thing itself be apparent ; and ye cannot with-
 out extreme Unreasonableness and the utmost
 Degree of Malice, deny it, that what I do, is
 by

by the immediate Power of God; then here is S E R M.
 a convincing Proof offered you, that I am truly XII.
 sent from God, and that the Doctrine I preach
 is for the establishment of *His Kingdom*, *ver.*
28; But if I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God,
then the Kingdom of God is come unto you. For,
 as one's entering into a strong man's house; and
 forcibly dispossessing him of his Goods, is an
 evident Demonstration, that he who so enters,
 is stronger, and comes with greater Authority,
 than he that had the first Possession: So my
 breaking the Power of Devils, by casting them
 out of the Bodies, and destroying their Domi-
 nion over the Minds of Men, is an undeniable
 Proof of my being sent by a Power and Autho-
 rity greater than theirs; *ver. 29; Or else how*
can one enter into a strong man's house and spoil his
goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then
he will spoil his goods? The connexion of the fol-
 lowing Words, *ver. 30,* is more difficult to be
 understood; for they may seem at first sight to
 be abrupt, and independent on what went be-
 fore; *He that is not with me, is against me; and*
he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad:
 But the True intent of them, is, to illustrate and
 confirm what went before, in some such Manner
 as This: When two great Powers are at [open
 and] irreconcilable Enmity against each other,
 even he who *only forbears* joining with one side,
 is thereupon reputed to be against it; according
 to the usual Proverb, *He that is not with me, is*

SERM. *against me*: How much more therefore (infern
 XII. our Saviour) ought ye to believe that *I*, who
 have actually done *so much* towards destroying
 the Power and Kingdom of the Devil, am really
 and in Truth acting in opposition against him,
 and not by confederacy with him! And then he
 adds in the Words of the Text; Wherefore *I*
say unto you, All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall
be forgiven unto men; but the Blasphemy against
the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men. The
 meaning is: Since 'tis as evident, as 'tis pos-
 sible for any thing to be, that the Works which
 I do, are by the immediate Authority of God,
 and by the Power of his Holy Spirit; Therefore
 whosoever shall resist this great Conviction, by
 so unreasonable and obstinate a degree of Malice,
 as to ascribe these very Works, these greatest and
 highest Evidences of Divine Authority, to the
 Power of the Devil; To such a Person God will
 never afford any further Means of Conviction;
 And therefore though all other Blasphemies and
 all particular Sins whatsoever, may be repented
 of and forgiven; yet He who is guilty of *this*
Total corruption of Mind, this maliciously per-
 verse and desperate Rejecting of the greatest and
 highest Conviction that God vouchsafes to afford
 men, shall never have granted him any further
 Means, of Repentance and Forgiveness. Every
 particular Kind, or Sort of Sin, whatsoever;
 and all other Blasphemies whatsoever, shall be
 forgiven men: Even he that speaks against *Me*,
 (says

(says our Lord,) in all *other respects*; or calumniates *me*, upon any *other* account whatsoever; and is not at first convinced by *my* preaching and Exhortations; may yet afterwards be convinced by the mighty *Works* he shall see, and by the *Power* of the *Holy Ghost*; and so repent and be forgiven: But he who obstinately resists even this greatest and most extraordinary Method, which God has thought fit to make use of for the Conversion of Mankind; and maliciously reviles the most evident Operations of the Spirit of God; such a one has no further means left, by which he might be convinced and brought to Repentance, and consequently he can never be forgiven. *Whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.*

THE Connexion and general meaning of the Words being thus explained, I shall for the further and more *particular* clearing of what difficulties may remain in them, and for removing such Scruples as may be apt to arise from them, take leave to add the following Observations; 1st, That our Saviour does not say, *The Sin against the Holy Ghost*, but *the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, shall not be forgiven. Neither in *this*, nor in any *other* Passage of Scripture, is there any mention at all of a *Sin against the Holy Ghost*. For indeed our Saviour is not here speaking of a *Sin*, of a particular *Act of Sin*; seeing on the con-

SERM. trary he expressly declares, that *All Manner of*
 XII. *Sin*, nay and all Blasphemy *also wherewith soever*
 men *shall blaspheme*, shall be forgiven unto them;
 But he speaks of a certain incurable *malicious*
Disposition of Mind, which by venting itself under
 such peculiar Circumstances in Blasphemy
 against the *greatest* of our Lord's Miracles, plainly
 discovered itself to be incapable of Amendment,
 by *any Means* which God would vouchsafe to
 make use of. And it was not the *particular Act*
of blaspheming, that itself rendered the Men un-
 pardonable; But *that particular Blasphemy*, in
 those particular Circumstances, was a *Sign* only
 or an *Evidence*, which our Saviour knew and de-
 clared to proceed from an *incurable* and therefore
unpardonable malicious Disposition of Mind. And
 this is evident from the Words immediately fol-
 lowing the Text, whose *connexion* usually is not
 sufficiently taken notice of. For thus, when our
 Saviour had declared the *Pharisees* blaspheming
 against the Holy Ghost, to be *unpardonable*; he
 adds, as a *Reason*, in the very next Words, *ver.*
 33. *Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good;*
or else make the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit cor-
rupt: For the Tree is known by his Fruit. O ge-
 neration of *Vipers*, how can ye, being evil, speak
 good things? For out of the abundance of the Heart,
 the Mouth speaketh. It is evident therefore, that
 not for the particular *Act* of Blasphemy, but for
 that *incurably wicked Disposition of Mind*, of which
 blaspheming in those Circumstances, was a plain
 Indi-

Indication, were these *Pbarisees* declared to be SERM.
XII.
 unpardonable. Nothing therefore can be gathered from this passage, concerning any particular *Sin against the Holy Ghost*, (as many have, without Reason, imagined) in it's own Nature unpardonable. For in reality *all wilful Sin whatsoever is against the Holy Ghost*; against the good Motions, against the guidance and direction of the good Spirit of God; yet not *every*, nay not *any* wilful Sin is upon that Account absolutely unpardonable; as appears from the whole Tenour of Scripture: Much less are blasphemous *Thoughts*, which melancholy pious persons are apt to complain of, and which therefore are not wilful at all; much less (I say) are uneasy blasphemous *Thoughts*, of this highest Malignity; when, generally speaking, they are not so much as *chosen* or *wilful Sins at all*. Even those *wilful Sins against* or in opposition to *the Holy Ghost*, (which yet is a Phrase never used in Scripture-language,) are in the Gospel always supposed pardonable upon true Repentance. The Blasphemy our Saviour here speaks of, is a thing of another Nature; it is not singly sinning *against the Person of the Holy Ghost*, or *against his* good Motions, but presumptuously *reviling* the greatest *Works* of the Holy Ghost, and so obstinately *rejecting* the last and solemnest Call to Repentance. And this is further evident from what our Saviour adds, that *he who speaks against the Son of Man*, might be forgiven; as the *Jews*, who reproached him as
 being

S E R M. being the Carpenter's Son, as a Wine-bibber and a
XIII Glutton, as a Friend of Publicans and Sinners, might
 be forgiven, if they repented upon the further
 Conviction that should afterward be afforded
 them: But he that blasphemed against the *Holy*
Ghost, against the highest Evidence of our Lord's
 greatest Miracles, was never to be forgiven; Not
 because even *this was in itself*, and in the Nature
 of the thing, absolutely unpardonable; (For no
 reason can be given why speaking against the
 Person of the *Holy Ghost*, should be *in itself* of
 greater Malignity, than speaking against *Christ*,
 or against *God the Father himself*;) but because it
 was an obstinate rejecting the last means of Con-
 viction, and an evident Token of incorrigible
 Malice. Among the Antient *Jews*, Heb. x. 28.
He that despised Moses's Law died without Mercy:
 Our Saviour in like manner declares, that he who
 by blaspheming against the Works of the Holy
 Spirit, despises and rejects the final Offer of the
Gospel, he also shall perish without Mercy. And
 this possibly may be the meaning of the other
 Phrase; that such a malicious Temper should
 not be pardoned, *neither in this World neither in the*
World to come; namely, neither in that present
 Age, which was the Time of the *Law*; nor in
 the Age to come, which is the Times of the
Messiah. 2dly, It is reasonable to suppose that
 this peremptory declaration of our Saviour, con-
 cerning the unpardonable Wickedness of those
 who thus blasphemously rejected the highest Evi-
 dence

dence of the Gospel, ought to be applied and understood of *those Persons* only, who themselves *saw* his Miracles, and rejected them purely out of a wicked Disposition; namely, the *Pharisees*, and unbelieving *Jews*. For, though those who live in after Ages, and are not Eye-witnesses of his mighty Works, have indeed nevertheless sufficient Evidence of the Truth of the Gospel; and in some few respects, as I before intimated, have even the Advantage over the greater Part of those who lived at that Time; yet, these Advantages arising from Arguments of abstract Reason, Consideration and Enquiry; which work differently upon Men at different Times; and may prevail afterwards, upon more mature consideration, over the same Person who at present rejects them; therefore no man's rejecting the Gospel now, can be known or supposed to proceed from the like incurable Malignity, as the Blasphemy of those who themselves *saw* our Lord's Miracles. *3dly*, It may yet further be conceived, not without Probability, that these severe Words of our Saviour, are applicable, not even so much as to *all* those *Pharisees*, who saw and rejected his Miracles; but to those only, who saw *that* particular great *Miracle* recorded in this chapter, and who reviled it with *that* particular malicious *Blasphemy*, of ascribing it to the Power of the unclean Spirit. For so St. *Mark* intimates, by adding in the Words immediately following the Text: *Mark* iii. 30. that Jesus spake thus severely

SERM.
XII.

SERM. verely of them, because *they said, he hath an un-*
 XII. *clean Spirit.* And indeed, since we do not find

that any Persons whatsoever were ever rejected from Baptism; it is reasonable to suppose that many of the *other Pharisees*, who had *seen* and perhaps also *spoken against* our Saviour's Miracles, might yet afterwards repent, be baptized, and obtain forgiveness. But *these*, who blasphemed in this *particular* manner, he *knew* were *incorrigible*, and perhaps *judicially* also resolved that no farther means should be offered them. And then the Words of the Text will be propheticall, and equivalent to those other expressions; *John x. 26. viii. 21, 24. Ye are none of my Sheep, ye shall die in your Sins*: which is the same as to say, *Ye will never be forgiven, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.* 4thly, If this Threatning is to be extended to any *other* Persons, it may seem most properly to reach the case of such, as, after the giving of the Holy Ghost at *Pentecost*, should in like manner revile that miraculous Dispensation. But there is no reason to think (as some have done,) that it belongs *only* to such as should blaspheme *after that*: For the Power of the Holy Ghost did as visibly appear to the *Pharisees* with whom our Saviour now conversed, as to those who saw that wonderful Gift at *Pentecost*; and the Words themselves seem *more naturally* to confine it to *those Pharisees only*: At least, it can be applied to both, *only* upon account of their *seeing* the Miracles; which was the highest Evidence that

that could possibly be given them. And if there S E R M.
XII.
 had been any such thing as any *other* Sin against the Holy Ghost, which Christians in after-times could be in danger of falling into; it cannot be imagined, but the Apostles in their Epistles, wherein they are diligent to caution men against all *other* Crimes, would have been much fuller and more pressing in their warnings to take heed of *this*, as being of more desperate consequence than any *other* whatsoever: Whereas, on the contrary, we find not in their writings any direct mention of any such Sin at all. 5thly and lastly, Yet this we may observe, that the Apostles frequently warn men to take heed of the *Approaches* towards the like Guilt, and of Sins which may seem next in Malignity; such as wilful Apostacy from the Profession, or from the whole Practice of Religion; concerning Persons guilty of which Crimes it is said, that it is *impossible* [exceeding difficult] *to renew them to Repentance*; that there *remains no more Sacrifice for their Sin*, Heb. x. 26—29. that like *Esau*, they *for one morsel sell their birth-right*; and, when it is joined with obstinacy, that their *Sin is unto Death*, i. e. that it is like a Disease which appears to be *mortal*, with little or no Hopes of Recovery. From which God of his infinite Mercy, &c.

S E R M O N XIII.

Of receiving the Holy Ghost.

[Preached on Whit Sunday.]

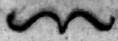
ACTS XIX. 2, 3.

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized?

S E R M. XIII. **I**N the following Discourse upon these words, I shall *first* endeavour briefly to explain the full meaning of the several *particular* expressions here made use of by the Apostle, and by the new Converts with whom he discoursed; and then, *secondly*, I shall consider the *general* Doctrine, concerning the Nature and Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which was the Foundation and Occasion of the *particular* incidents referred to in the Text. It was the Method of the Apostles, when they had preached the Gospel in a Number of places,

places, to return after a certain Time through S E R M.
the same places where they had formerly preach- XIII
ed; to confirm, and strengthen the Believers; 
to set in order the several Churches; to redress
what was amiss; to exhort and comfort them,
under the Persecutions they were likely to meet
with; and to examine how far they preserved
pure and uncorrupt, that Doctrine which had
been delivered unto them, with regard both to
Faith and Practice. *Acts xv. 36. Paul said unto
Barnabas; Let us go again and visit our Brethren,
in every City where we have preached the Word of
the Lord, and see how they do. Ver. 41. And he
went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the
Churches. And ch. xvi. 5. And so were the Churches
established in the faith, and increased in Number daily.*
The Text, with the foregoing and following
verses, is an Account of part of this Progress of
St. Paul in visiting the Churches, and of the De-
sign and Effect of that his journey amongst them.
*Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came
to Ephesus, ver. 1. And finding certain Disciples,
he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost
since ye believed?* As the Apostles were themselves
baptized with the Holy Ghost at *Pentecost*, so it
pleased God at the *first preaching of the Gospel*,
generally to endue *others* likewise, who were bap-
tized by the Apostles with some visible Gifts of
the Holy Ghost, such as speaking with Tongues,
Propheying, and the like. Not that this was
the principal and most valuable Effect of Baptism;
For

S E R M. For *that* consisted in the *internal* Benefit on the
 XIII. Mind of the persons *themselves*, Remission of past



Sin, and Sanctification of the Spirit for the future: But in order to a more effectual Conviction of *others* to whom the Gospel was to be preached, and for the speedier propagating of the Doctrine of Christ, it pleased God that the Power of the Holy Ghost in them who were baptized, discovered itself in those first times by *external* Evidences and miraculous Operations: *Tongues*, says the Apostle, *are for a Sign, not for them that believe, but for them that believe not*; 1 Cor. xiv. 22. Tho' therefore these miraculous Effects of the Spirit conferred in Baptism, were not the *principal* with regard to the persons *themselves* on whom they were conferred; yet being the most *visible* to *others*, and at that time generally attending the other more secret and invisible Gifts, it was very natural for the Apostle, when he came to examine into the State of such Disciples as had been converted in his Absence, to express himself after this manner, *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?* The matter he was chiefly concerned to know, was the *thing signified*; whether they were true Believers, and had received the Gospel in the Truth and Purity thereof. But the thing demanded in his question, was the *Evidence* or *external Sign*; Has God bestowed upon you those visible Gifts of the Spirit, which are now the usual Characteristicks of the Disciples of Christ? To this question, they returned
 a very

a very surprizing Answer indeed, if our Translation express'd it rightly; *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*: As if any, either Jew or even Gentile, much less Christian Convert, could possibly have been so ignorant, as to know nothing at all, nor ever have heard any thing, either of the Being or Influences of the Spirit of God. The Meaning evidently is, (and so the words ought to have been rendred,) *We have not heard that there has been any such Giving of the Holy Ghost*; We have neither received any of these extraordinary Gifts *ourselves*, nor been informed of their being bestowed on *others*, or that we were to *expect* any such thing upon our believing. And indeed it may seem very wonderful, how it should happen they *could* be, even *so far* ignorant as This. But *the reason* appears, in what follows. For when the Apostle hereupon asks them again; *Unto what then were ye baptized*, if not unto the expectation of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost? they reply, ver. 3; *Unto John's Baptism*. Which Baptism of *John the Baptist* being preparatory only to the Reception of Christ, and intended only as a *Means* to a further *End*; 'tis no wonder it was not accompanied with the Effusion of those perfective Gifts of the Spirit, which would have made needless that Baptism into the Name of Christ, which was to follow. This therefore is the Meaning of what the Apostle thereupon answers them again, ver. 4; *John* (says he) *verily baptized with the Baptism of Repentance*;

SERM. saying unto the people, that they should believe on
 XIII. Him, which should come after him, that is, on

Christ Jesus. The Intention of which Reply, is, *John indeed baptized you* (saith he) *into the expectation of the Messiah that was to come;* but before you enjoy the Benefit of his *actual Coming*, you must verify that *expectation* by receiving him now he is come; and fulfil the *intention* of *John's Baptism*, by being consequently baptized into the Name of *Christ*. *John's Baptism* was but a *Promise* or Declaration of your *Intention*; of being afterwards baptized into *Christ*; And the Advantage you expect from being baptized by *John*, can be made good to you only by fulfilling that Promise, in embracing the Doctrine and the Religion of *Christ*. When they heard This, ver. 5. they were baptized in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*; And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

THE Occasion and Meaning of the words being thus explained, we may from this History, whereof the words of the Text contain the principal circumstances, make the following Observations.

1st, THAT the Nature and Spirit of the Christian Religion, is to lay as little stress as possible upon all *external Rites*; and to have the greatest Regard that can be, to the *moral Qualifications* of mens Minds. The *Persons* to whom St. Paul puts the Question in the Text, are in the verse before,

before, styled *Disciples*, or *Believers*, that is, *S E R M. Christians*; though they had been instructed in *XIII.* nothing yet, but in the Doctrine of *John the Baptist*. Repentance from dead works, and Reformation of Life, and a preparatory Disposition to receive the Will of God when made known to them by the *Messias* to come, was here judged sufficient to denominate men *Disciples*; even before they had been baptized into the Name of *Christ*, or had received any of the *external Gifts* of the Holy Ghost, or had so much as heard that such Gifts were to be bestowed upon them. There is *no external Rite* in matters of Religion, more positively and expressly commanded by God, or more indispensably and without any exception required by our Saviour, than that of *Baptism*: *Except a man be born, saith he, of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*: And yet even in *This very case* of so express a command, (to shew how much Religion is judged of in the sight of God by the moral and virtuous Disposition of the Heart, more than by the outward Form,) there are *many instances* in Scripture, where the *inward Disposition* has been accepted instead of the *outward Form*; but *no case*, where the *Form* or *Ceremony* has in any wise supplied the want of the *inward Disposition*. The Thief upon the Cross was assured by our Saviour, that he should be with him That day in Paradise; because in the Disposition of his Heart he was fitly qualified for Baptism,

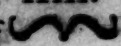
S E R M. tism, though there was no possibility of his having the Ceremony performed upon him. The Persons mentioned in the Text, had they died before their being baptized in the name of Christ; it cannot be questioned, but that those whom the inspired Writer calls *Disciples here*, would by our Lord have been acknowledged for his true *Disciples hereafter*. *Cornelius* the good Centurion, was *before his Baptism* filled with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit: And *no reason* can be conceived why That Testimony of the Divine Favour should be conferred upon him just *before* his *Baptism*, which the Apostles themselves expected could not have been bestowed till after it; but only that the Spirit of God thought it of importance to declare in so extraordinary a manner, that even where to the Use of a Form or Ceremony God *has* annexed his Gifts, yet even there, not *upon account of* the Form, or the Rite itself, but upon account of the *inward Qualifications* of the *Mind*, does he bestow his spiritual Blessings. In the regular Administration of Baptism itself, 'tis not the *washing away of the Filth of the Flesh*, that saveth us; but *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*; 1 Pet. iii. 21. Many *Martyrs* in the Primitive times, upon their professing their Faith in Christ, were *immediately* hurried away to bear Testimony for him with their Blood: And no man doubted, but that they who *in reality* were buried *with him* and *for him* into Death; were at least equalized with those, who by Baptism

tism died with him only *in a Figure*. Infants who die SERM.
 unbaptized; unavoidably and not possibly by any XIII.
 fault of their own; cannot with reason be worse and
 more hardly thought of, than *grown persons* in
 the like condition. For concerning *Infants*, as
Infants, and merely upon Account of their In-
 nocency, it is, that our Saviour affirms, that
of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. And the rea-
 son why they are saved, is not *because* they are
baptized; but they are *therefore* baptized, *because*
 they are capable of *Salvation*; They are *therefore*
 fit to be admitted into the Body of God's Church
 on *Earth*, *because* they are by their Innocence
 qualified to become Members of his eternal
 Kingdom in *Heaven*. Nevertheless, though the
thing signified itself, is always of much more im-
 portance than the *Sign*; and often accepted by
 God in the stead of and without the external
 Form; yet this is always so to be understood,
 when the external Form *cannot* be had. For
 where, by the Person's own wilful and contemp-
 tuous neglect, any Ceremony of God's express
 Appointment is omitted; there *he that despiseth,*
despiseth not Man, but God; who has also annex-
 ed to what means he pleaseth, the Gift of his
 Holy Spirit. *Except a man be born of Water and*
of the Spirit, saith our Saviour; except he that
 has the Means and Opportunity of doing it,
 makes use of those Means of Grace which God
 has been pleased to appoint; 'tis reasonable he
 should fall short of the Grace itself, and *he cannot*

S E R M. *enter into the Kingdom of God. Except ye Eat my*

XIII. *Flesh and Drink my Blood, saith our Lord in another place; His principal Meaning is, except ye receive my Doctrine, and by obeying it, incorporate yourselves into my spiritual Body; ye have no Life in you: This (I say) is plainly his principal Meaning, because the Words were spoken before any external Symbols of his Body and Blood were instituted: Yet, when such Sacramental Symbols were appointed; then it became the Duty of every sincere Christian, not only to eat our Lord's Flesh and drink his Blood spiritually; not only so to imbibe his Doctrine, as to make it the Support and Nourishment of a Spiritual Life, the Spring and Ground-work, of a Holy and Virtuous Conversation; but it became their Duty also to participate of the External Sacrament, and to make use of the Means, as well as desire the End, of Christ's own Appointment. The Disciples in the Text, when they heard St. Paul preach about the Gift of the Holy Ghost, immediately they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus; And without so doing, they would not have received the Gifts of the Spirit, notwithstanding that the Text does before call them Disciples, upon their having been baptized with the Baptism of Repentance by John. This shews how well consistent the Necessity of observing any Rite or Ceremony of God's own Appointment is, with the Christian Religion's laying at the same time no stress at all upon the external*

Form

Form or Ceremony itself, but only on the *inter-SERIAL*
nal moral Disposition or virtuous Qualification XIII.
of the Mind. To which *inward* Qualification of 
Mind, great regard is always shown in Scripture,
even where *all external* Advantages have been
wanting. Thus to the *Scribe* who was so well
disposed, as to judge that the Love of God and
of our Neighbour, was more valuable than all
whole burnt-offerings; our Saviour immediately
replies, *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of*
God; Mark xii. 34. Of the *young man* who had
observed the Commandments from his youth, 'tis
recorded that *Jesus beholding him loved him*;
Mark x. 21. To the *Syrophœnician Woman*,
whom at first our Lord seemed to reject with great
severity, for not being of the house of *Israel*; yet
at length he replies, *O woman, great is thy Faith,*
be it unto thee even as thou wilt; Matth. xv. 28.
And of the *Gentiles themselves*, St. Paul makes
no scruple to affirm, that their Uncircumcision,
if they keep the Righteousness of the Law, shall
be counted unto them for Circumcision; *Rom.*
ii. 26. But now, on the *other side*, no *external*
Advantages, no *Rites* or observations whatsoever,
are ever accepted in the stead of, or without,
the *inward* moral and virtuous Disposition of the
Heart and Mind. Not *Baptism* itself; not the
Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*; not even the
miraculous Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost,
are of any avail to an unrighteous person. *Many*
will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we

SERM. not prophefied in thy Name, and in thy Name have
 XIII. cast out devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity; Matth. vii. 22.

2. THE next Observation we may draw from the words of the Text, is, that every Disciple of Christ is here supposed to have received the Gift of the Holy Ghost. For so St. Paul, as in words equivalent to asking them whether they had been baptized or no, thus puts the Question to them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And what was then meant by receiving the Holy Ghost, appears from the following words, ver. 6. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophefied. This was the immediate Effect of the Holy Ghost's first coming upon the Apostles at Pentecost; And This was generally the Effect of its coming afterward upon new Converts at their Baptism. And when this miraculous Effect ceased, yet still the receiving of the Holy Ghost was as constant and as necessary as ever: because Except a man be born of the Spirit, as well as of water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. 'Tis Now true, as well as it was Then, that if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and that the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in us, except we be reprobates.

THE

THE way to know whether any person has this SERM.
 Spirit dwelling in him, or no; is by the *Fruits* of XIII.
 the Spirit; For *the Tree is known by its Fruit*; 
 Matth. xii. 33. Now the *Fruits* of the Spirit, are
 either *temporary* or *perpetual*. *Temporary*; such
 as are the *miraculous* Gifts of *speaking with tongues*,
prophecy, *healing diseases*, and *the like*. Or
Perpetual; such as are the *moral* Dispositions and
 Habits of the Mind, worked in us by the Spi-
 rit of God, improved in us by his continual As-
 sistance, and acceptable to him in the Perfor-
 mance; Namely *Goodness*, *Righteousness*, and
Truth, as St. Paul reckons them up; *Ephes. v. 9*;
 and more largely; *Gal. v. 22*; *The Fruit of the*
Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,
goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. These are
 the *permanent* Fruits of the Spirit, necessary to
 be found at *all times* in every baptized Person;
 Otherwise his Baptism is nothing else, but mere-
 ly the washing away the Filth of the Flesh; so
 that, being born of *Water* only, and not of the
Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.
 In whomsoever these *moral Fruits* of the Spirit
 are found, the other *miraculous and extraordinary*
 ones are *Now* unnecessary; And even *Then*, at
 the first preaching of the Gospel, when they were
 the *most needful* of all, yet were they useless and
 unprofitable to those very persons in whom they
 most abounded, if the *moral Fruits* of the Spirit
 were not found in conjunction with them. By
 the Habits of Piety and true Holiness, men may

Now

SERM. Now show themselves as full of the Holy Ghost
 XIII. as ever, *without* any miraculous Gifts; *with* the
 greatest abundance of which, they were still void
 of the Holy Ghost even *Then*, if not indued with
 Piety and true Holiness. For, *miraculous Gifts*,
 were but *Signs* of the Holy Spirit working by
 them, not *in* and *upon* them. And therefore
 such Gifts were useful, rather to *Others* than *them-*
selves; to convince *beholders*, rather than to sanc-
 tify the *persons*: *Tongues*, saith St. Paul, are for
 a *Sign*, not to *them that believe*, but to *them that*
believe not. But *moral Virtues*, are Evidences of
 the Spirit's dwelling in men, and *sanctifying*
 mens Hearts and Lives: Which to *themselves* is
 the *End* and the *Effect* of That *Belief*, the produc-
 ing but the *first Beginnings* whereof in *Others*, is
 all that is intended by *miraculous Gifts*. These
 extraordinary Gifts, therefore, were only *Opera-*
tions of the Spirit; But Righteousness and Ho-
 liness are properly called its *Fruits*. *Fruits of the*
Spirit; because worked, not as the others, ex-
 trinsically, necessarily, and without the concu-
 rrence of the Persons themselves; but worked *in*
 the mind, and *with* the free choice and *Will* of
 the Person, by the *approbation*, *assistance*, and
help of the Spirit of God; *concurring with him*,
 not barely operating by him. For which reason,
These are never found but in *Good men*; being
 indeed the Qualifications which *denominate* men
 such: But the *Others* were often bestowed even
 upon *hypocritical persons*; whom our Saviour,
 though

though they had done in his Name many wonderful Works, yet declares he will reject from him, as being at the same time Workers of iniquity. And hence it is, that our Lord makes that remarkable distinction; *St. Luke x. 20; In This, rejoice not, that the Spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your Names are written in Heaven*: That is, 'tis a thing much more valuable, to be a good man, than to be able to cast out Devils. Hence also it is, that *St. Paul* gives so manifest a preference to works of *righteousness*, before *miraculous Gifts*; *1 Cor. xii. 30; Have All the gifts of healing? do All speak with tongues? do All interpret? But covet earnestly the best Gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way; a way yet more excellent, even than the best Gifts. And what That is, he tells us in the next words; Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal: And tho' I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; And tho' I have all Faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. If I have no Charity; that is, if I am not indued with a Spirit of Universal Love and Goodness towards Men. For so it is remarkable in the whole New Testament, that the word Charity never signifies, as it does now in common speech, the mere giving of Alms to the poor; but it always means, in a larger Signification, That Love and Desire of doing*

S E R M.

XIII.

SERMON. *doing good to all men*, which is opposed to Uncharitableness, Peevishness, Hatred, Animosity, and Factiousness. As is particularly evident in the Verse next following; where *Charity* is expressly distinguished from *giving Alms to the poor*, as the *whole* of a Duty from its *part*: *Though I give* (saith he) *my body to be burned, and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not Charity*, (that is, have not an universally good and righteous Spirit,) *it profiteth me nothing*.

3dly, FROM the character of the persons described in the Text, we may observe that those words, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*, cannot possibly be a right translation: but that they ought to have been rendered thus, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Giving of the Holy Ghost*; any such Gift or Distribution of it, as the Apostle inquired after. (There is a like expression: *John vii. 39*; *The Holy Ghost was not yet*; so 'tis in the original; which in the Translation we very rightly express, *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified*.) Now of *This* indeed, of the extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Effusion of the Holy Ghost, the persons mentioned in the Text *might* in their present circumstances be ignorant: But, *whether there be any Holy Ghost*, This is what they could not possibly make a Question of. For, not to say that even the *Gentiles themselves* were not without *Some* Notion of a *divine Afflatus*, 'tis well known that

the

the Jews had in the Writings of the Prophets S E R M.
XIII.
perpetual mention of the *Spirit of God*: And therefore the Persons in the Text, who were of all other Jews or Profelytes the *best instructed*, as having been baptized with *John's Baptism*, 'tis plain could not possibly be ignorant of *That*, however they might not yet have heard of the extraordinary and miraculous Effusion of it since the Ascension of Christ.

4thly, FROM the *manner* of the Apostle's putting the Question, *Unto What then were ye baptized?* unto *what*, if not unto the expectation of the Gift of the *Holy Ghost*? from This *manner* of the Apostle's putting the Question, it appears, that the following words, ver. 5; *when they heard this they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus*; and the like Expressions in other parts of this Book, ch. viii. 16, *they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus*: and ch. ii. 38; *be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ*; and ch. x. 48; *be commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord*; it appears (I say) that these Expressions do by no means signify, as if any one was ever baptized *barely* into the Name of *Christ*; but on the contrary, that they are an abbreviate way of speaking, (such is every where very usual in matters supposed to be already perfectly well known,) to put the *part* for the *whole*. Baptizing into *Jesus Christ*, was well known by all Christians, to signify baptizing in *That Form*, which our Lord *Jesus Christ* had appointed; that is, in the
Name

SERM. Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

XIII. Holy Ghost : And where-ever *part* of this Form

is express'd, the *whole* is always understood to be implied. Had it been usual, according to the *Letter* of these expressions, to baptize men into the Name of *Christ* only; the Apostle could not properly have asked those who had not yet heard of the Gift of the *Holy Ghost*, *Unto what then were ye Baptized?* but his question should have been, *After what manner have ye been instructed?* But putting the Question in the manner he does; *If ye are ignorant of the Gift of the Holy Ghost, Unto what then were ye Baptized?* shows plainly, that not only in the doctrinal *instruction* of a Christian, but also in the *Baptism* itself, there must have been mention of the *Holy Ghost*, notwithstanding that abbreviate manner of speaking, wherein they are said only *to have been in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, in contra-distinction to *John's Baptism*. And from hence also it appears further, *what* was then understood by those words in the form of Baptism; *And of the Holy Ghost*, or *in the Name of the Holy Ghost*: Namely, that the person, as he was baptized into the Knowledge of *God*, and into the Death of *Christ*, so he was baptized also into the Expectation of the Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*; whether those Gifts were *extraordinary*, as the miraculous Powers conferred at that particular Time; or *ordinary*, as the Sanctification of Mens Hearts for ever.

Lastly,

Lastly, FROM the History in the Text, we S E R M. may learn the difference between the Baptism of **XIII.**

John and that of *Christ*, how they were Both really but One thing, the former being imperfect without the latter, and the latter perfecting only what the former had begun, and therefore not being called a Rebaptizing. When the Disciples, to the question, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* made this Answer, *Unto John's Baptism;* The Apostle replies, ver. 4; *John verily baptized with the Baptism of Repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus:* And when they heard This, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus; And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them. *John* baptized into the Expectation only, of Him that was to come after; And therefore This his Baptism was imperfect, till the intention of it was fulfilled by the same Persons being afterwards baptized into the Name of Christ when he was come, and receiving actually his Gifts, of which the Former Baptism was but declaring a preparatory Expectation. And This is what is set forth in those Texts, where *John the Baptist* expressly acknowledges and declares, *I indeed* (saith he) *baptize you with Water unto Repentance; but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire;* Matth. iii. 11. Mark i. 7, 8. Luke iii. 16, 17. Acts i. 5, and xi. 16; *With the Holy Ghost, and with Fire;* that is, with

S E R M. with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, both *ordinary*
 XIII. and *extraordinary*: Which was *literally* fulfilled
 upon the *Apostles* at Pentecost; and, in the *virtual Effect*, upon all the *other* Disciples who were
 baptized afterwards. And again: *John bare record*, saying, John i. 31, 32; that He [*viz.* that *Christ*] should be made manifest to Israel, therefore *am I come baptizing* [only] *with Water*: According to the Account the Angel prophetically gave before of his Office, *Luke i. 16*; *Many of the children of Israel shall be turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the Spirit and power of Elias; to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* These are the *particular* Observations I thought useful to draw from the History in the Text: It remains that we consider, in the next place, the *general* Doctrine concerning the Nature and Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which was the Foundation and Occasion of the *particular* Incidents referred to in the Text.

S E R M O N XIV.

Of receiving the Holy Ghost.

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]

A C T S xix. 2, 3.

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized?

IN a former discourse upon these Words, I S E R M.
 have endeavoured briefly to explain the XIV.
 meaning, of the several *particular* expressions here made use of by the Apostle, and by the new Converts with whom he discoursed. It remains at this time, according to the Method proposed, that I proceed, in the next place, to consider the *general* Doctrine, concerning the *Nature* and *Gifts* of the Holy Spirit, which was the Foundation and Occasion of the *particular* Incidents referred to in the Text. And

SERM. I. WHEN *John the Baptist* came preaching
 XIV. and baptizing with Water; with whose Baptism
 only, the Disciples in the Text have been baptized,
 had neither received the Gift of the Holy Ghost
themselves, nor so much as *heard* of its miraculous
 Gifts being bestowed on *others*; he modestly and
 plainly confessed, *Matth. iii. 11. I indeed baptize*
you with Water unto Repentance; but He that com-
eth after me, is mightier than I, whose Shoes I am
not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the
Holy Ghost and with Fire. According to this De-
 claration of *John the Baptist*, our Saviour, a little
 before his Ascension, promised his Disciples,
Acts i. 5. John truly baptized with Water, but ye
shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days
hence. And this his Promise was effectually made
 good to them, in that miraculous Effusion of the
 Holy Spirit at Pentecost, which we this day com-
 memorate, and which is particularly described in
 the second chapter of the *Acts*. Where that Cir-
 cumstance of *there appearing* unto the Apostles clo-
 ven tongues, like as of Fire, ver. 3. explains the
 meaning of that propheticall Phrase used by *John*
the Baptist concerning our Lord, *He shall baptize*
you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire; He shall
baptize you with the Holy Ghost, descending at
first visibly in the appearance of *Fire*; and conti-
 nuing with you afterwards, in pursuance of what
 that Emblem represented, by an Assistance as
 much more powerful and efficacious than what
John Baptist pretended to, as *Fire* is more power-

ful and more purifying than Water. To the S E R M. Apostles and first Disciples, who were to spread XIV. the Gospel over the World, this their being baptized with the Holy Ghost, was accompanied with miraculous Gifts and Powers; such as speaking with tongues, healing diseases, and the like: But when the reason of these miraculous Operations ceased, yet *still* every Christian is baptized with the *Holy Ghost* as well as with *Water*; and his *internal* sanctifying Gifts and Graces, are to continue with us always, even unto the end of the World. If any one has not received *these* Gifts of the Holy Ghost, it may still be asked him with the same propriety as in the Text, *Unto what then was ye baptized?* If any man has not in him the Spirit of Christ; if he does not show forth in his Life the Fruits of the Spirit, by Works of Righteousness and true Piety; if his Heart be not sanctified by this Spirit of Holiness; if his Mind approves not, and delights not in things spiritual; if his Will obeys not the good Motions of this Divine Assister; if the Actions of his Life are not guided by the Commands of God, revealed to us in Scripture by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost; *to what purpose then was such a Person baptized?*

It may here perhaps be inquired, *Does not the Spirit of God distribute to every man severally as he himself willeth? Does not the wind blow where it listeth, and so* (saith our Saviour) *is every one that is born of the Spirit?* Are we not justified freely by

SERM. *God's grace?* And does not the Apostle accordingly require us humbly to acknowledge, *Who maketh thee to differ from another?* How then can it be objected to any man as a *Fault*, or as a *Defect* in himself, that he has not received the Holy Ghost, or that he is not indued with those Gifts and Graces, which are not his own acquirements, but free distributions of the Spirit of God? To give a clear and satisfactory answer to this Difficulty, it is necessary that we attend to the following Distinction.

SOME Gifts of the Spirit are mere external miraculous Powers; such as speaking with Tongues, healing Diseases, and the like: And of these it is, that the Apostle declares, that the Spirit *so* divides to every man severally as he willeth, and *so* maketh one to differ from another, that nothing at all of these kinds of Gifts depends in any measure upon the Will of the Persons themselves. And therefore as by *having* these Gifts, no man was the better Christian; so no man by *wanting* them, was the worse; these Gifts being bestowed, not for the Benefit of the *Persons themselves*, but for the Conversion of *others*.

OTHER Gifts of the Spirit, are particular Powers and *Qualifications* for particular Offices; Of which the Apostle speaks, *Eph. iv. 7, 11. To every one of us is given grace (or a gift,) according to the measure of the Gift of Christ; who gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of*

the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. And, with respect to *these*, the Goodness of a Christian did not consist in his having *this* or *that* particular Gift, but in making a right *Use* of his Talent, whatever it was. *Rom. xii. 3. It was God that dealt to every man the measure of Faith;* that is, (as it appears from the words immediately following;) God, according to his own good pleasure, distributed to each one a *particular Trust* or Employment: That is in this place the meaning of the *Measure of Faith;* It is a *Trust* committed to each one's *Fidelity* or *Faithfulness*. Having therefore Gifts (adds the Apostle, ver. 6.) *differing according to the grace that is given to us; whether it be prophesying, let us prophesy according to the proportion of Faith,* (according to the proportion of the Gift entrusted to our *Fidelity*; so the words properly signify;) *Or if it be Ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity,* (that is, liberally;) *he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

AGAIN: Other Gifts of the Spirit, are *particular and personal advantageous Circumstances* in the peculiar *Constitution* of Men's *Bodies*, the natural *Frame and Temper* of their *Mind*, or their external *State of Life and Condition* in the World; by which they are peculiarly fitted for the exercise of some particular Offices, or for the continuing

S E R M. nuing in some particular *Manner* and *Course* of *Life*.

XIV. Of *these* the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. vii. 7. *I would,* says he, *that all men were even as I myself; But every man hath his proper gift of God, (a natural Qualification or Fitness for certain particular Duties or States of Life,) one after This manner, and another after That.* And, with respect to *These*, the Goodness of a Christian does not consist in his being indued with *this* or *that* particular Qualification; but in his behaving himself *suitably* to *these* Qualifications wherewith God *has* indued him.

LASTLY, *Other* (and indeed the *Principal*) Gifts or Fruits of the Spirit, are *moral Virtues*; Righteousness, Peace, Goodness, Meekness, Temperance, and the like. And in *These* lies the only difficulty of the Question. If they be Fruits of the *Spirit*, and worked in us by the Power of the *Grace* of God; how then can it be objected to any man as a *Fault* or a *Defect* in *himself*, that he has not *Thus* received the Holy Ghost. The True Answer is; that these *moral* Graces, are not, like those others before-mentioned, worked on men necessarily by an external operation, but depend on the indeavours of their own *Will*, at the same time that they are promoted by the Assistance of the *Holy Spirit*. Every person that embraces the Gospel and is baptized, has received the Promise of the Holy Ghost; and 'tis wholly his own Fault, and his own Wickedness only, if, with That Assistance, he

he brings not forth the Fruits of the Spirit. S E R M.
 The Assistance of the Spirit, is indeed necessary XIV.
 to *inable men* to bring forth Fruits meet for the
 Kingdom of God; But then, because 'tis the
Assistance only, and not (like the miraculous operations) the *entire* Work of the Spirit; and because That Assistance is always afforded men in proportion to the sincere endeavours of their *own Will* co-operating; therefore 'tis justly charged upon a man as his own Fault, if he wants those Virtues and Graces of the Spirit, which, were it not for his own wilful rejecting its good Motions, the good Spirit of God would never be wanting in assisting him to practise. *Examine yourselves* (saith St. Paul) *whether ye be in the Faith: Prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you,* (or, as it is elsewhere expressed, *the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you,*) *except ye be reprobates,* that is, except by your own perverse wickedness ye drive him from you, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. And for this reason (I suppose) it is, that whereas the *miraculous* operations, are generally in Scripture styled the *Gifts* of the Spirit; the *moral* Virtues are on the contrary called, not the *Gifts*, but much more usually the *Fruits* of the Spirit. *Fruits*; to the production of which, it is as necessarily requisite, that there be *good ground* in which the root is planted; as that the *root* be good, which is planted in that ground. 'Tis as necessary in order to bringing forth the *Fruits* of the Spirit, that the Will and

S E R M. good Disposition of the Person himself, concur
 XIV. with the good Motions of the Spirit ; as 'tis necessary that the Spirit affords his Assistance, to enable the Person effectually to fulfil his own good Dispositions. Our Saviour has illustrated This to us, in the Parable of the Sower ; where the Fruit brought forth in several places, is represented exactly proportionable to the Goodness of the Ground. The Seed sown, is the Word of God ; and the Rain which caused it to grow, is the Assistance of the divine Spirit. Now though without Seed sown in the Earth, and without Rain from Heaven, no Fruit indeed could have been produced ; yet to the Badness of the *ground* only, is all the Failure justly ascribed in this Parable by our Lord, because the other Necessaries were supplied from above. In like manner, though Christian Virtues, are indeed the Fruits of the Spirit, and could not, without the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, be acceptably and effectually produced ; yet because This Assistance from above is never wanting but through our own unworthiness, therefore most justly is every wicked person blamed and punished, for being void of those Virtues, which are the Fruits of the Spirit. The same thing is expressed to us in the Parable of the Vineyard, *If. v. 2* ; where God complains by the Prophet concerning the people of the *Jews* whom he compares to a *vineyard* ; that he had *fenced it, and gathered out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the*

the choicest Vine; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. SERM. XIV.

The planting and dressing the Vineyard was necessary to its bringing forth good Grapes; but when it failed to do so, the Fault was in the Vineyard itself, ver. 4. *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, When I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* God does, on his part, always what is necessary for our Assistance; and no more denies his Holy Spirit to such as worthily ask him, than a tender Father, if his Son asks an Egg, will give him a Scorpion; Luke xi. 12. But men by their own unworthiness, and resisting his good Motions, do quench and grieve and drive him from them; and then most justly is it charged upon them as their *own Fault*, if they have not in them the Spirit of God, which yet at the same time is God's *free Gift* when bestowed at all. *Free*; because originally God had no obligation, but his own mere Goodness, to confer it on *any*; and yet nevertheless it is every man's *own Fault*, if he receives it not; because God never with-holds this his Free Gift, but from Those only who are not sincerely willing to co-operate with it; in bringing forth those Fruits of Righteousness and true Holiness, which upon account of That concurrence, are, at the same time, both the *Virtues* of the *Man*, and the *Fruits* of the *Spirit*. When therefore the Scripture affirms that we are

justified

S E R M. justified freely by his Grace; the meaning is not, XIV. that the Grace of God operates upon Men as Machines; and that *he* so acts upon them, as to make needless their acting for *themselves*. But the intention of the Phrase is to declare, that it is owing to the free Grace, or undeserved Favour of God, made known in the Gospel; that the imperfect Fruits of Righteousness which by our best endeavours we are able to bring forth, are accepted of him unto justification; and that the Assistance of the good Spirit of God is always at hand, to strengthen and enable us to bring forth those Fruits. In like manner, when our Saviour declares, that *the Wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the Sound thereof, but know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth*; and that *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*; the meaning is not, that the Spirit regenerates Men without any care or co-operation of their own; (for That would make all the Exhortations of the Gospel vain and absurd; (but the Intent of the passage is, that the Manner and Degrees, by which the Grace of the Gospel enables a man to reform the whole moral Frame and Temper of his Mind, are as imperceptible to Sense, as the secret Causes of many great Effects and Operations in Nature. That Regeneration is owing to the Assistance of *the Holy Ghost*, our Saviour plainly shows in this argument, both by the similitude itself, and by expressly calling it our being *born of the Spirit*; Yet that at the same time it depends upon the
man's

man's own Will, whether that divine Assistance S E R M.
shall take effect in him; he no less plainly de- XIV.

clares in the very same discourse, by *requiring* it of *Us* as an indispensable *Duty*, that we *be born of the Spirit*: *Except a man*, saith he, *be born of Water and of the Spirit*, *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*. From hence we may understand how it comes to pass, that usually in Scripture-Phrase, both all the good that *men do* is ascribed to *God*, and all the good that *God works in them* is still nevertheless ascribed to *themselves*. It is *God* that *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*; And yet in the very same verse we are commanded to *work out our own Salvation* ourselves; nay, we are commanded to do it for that very reason, because *God* has given us the Power both of Willing and performing it. As every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed; and yet at the same time all Sin is ascribed to the Temptations of the Devil, because the Devil is the Head of Apostacy, and delights in the Sins of Men, and lays before them opportunities of being enticed and drawn away by their own Lust and Wickedness, without which he could otherwise have no Power over them; so, because *God* is the original Author of all good, and the Giver of all the Powers by which we do good, and encourages and assists us in the performance of it; therefore most justly in Scripture is all the good we do, ascribed to *Him*; and yet, because without our own Care
and

S E R M. and Concurrence to put them in *Action*, all these
 XIV. Powers and Assistances are in vain; it is therefore very reasonably urged as a *Duty* incumbent upon *Ourselves*, to *grow in grace*, 2 Pet. iii. 18; and it is required of us by an indispensable Obligation, that *We bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit*. And This is implied to us in the very Form of Baptism: For when we are baptized in the *Name of the Holy Ghost*, into *what is it that we are so baptized*, but into the *expectation* of the *Assistance* of the Holy Spirit, and into a solemn *Promise* of *submitting* ourselves accordingly to his holy *Guidance and Direction*? As, being baptized in the Name of *the Father*, is declaring our *Assurance* of *Reconciliation* and *Return* to his *Favour*, who had been justly offended with us; and a solemn *Dedication* of ourselves to his *Service* for the future, as the One supreme Governor and Lord of the Universe: And being baptized in the Name of *the Son*, is being baptized into the *Remission* of Sins by his Blood, and into a solemn *Obligation*, on our own part, of dying with him unto Sin, and rising again unto *Newness of Life*: So, being baptized in the Name of *the Holy Ghost*, is at the same time a solemn Declaration both of our *Hoping* for his Guidance, and of our *Resolving* to obey it.

2. I HAVE been the longer upon This *first* Head concerning the *Gifts* of the Spirit, because it is a Doctrine of the Highest Importance to us, and of great Moment in Practice. That which remains in the 2^d place, concerning the *Nature*
 and

and Offices of the Holy Spirit, being more speculative, I shall explain very briefly in few words. S E R M.
XIV.

As to the proper *Nature* of this divine Spirit, the Vanity and Pride of learned men has often confounded their Understandings, while they have presumed to be wise above what is written, intruding into things which they have not seen, and attempting to explain what God has not revealed. The Essence and inmost nature of the smallest *Body*, we cannot fully understand: The Life of the meanest *Animal*, is beyond all our Philosophy to explain: The Nature of the *Soul of Man*, is still a more unsearchable Mystery; The Nature and Essence of *Angels*, is yet far more unfathomable than any of these: How then should vain man presume to search out the Nature of the *Spirit* of God? the Nature of the *only begotten Son* of God? the Nature of the *Father* himself, the incomprehensible God and Father of all things? What the Scripture expressly declares to us, is all we can ever know concerning these Matters; and This the meanest Christian is as capable of understanding, as the learnedest Disputers in the World. Concerning the *Nature of the Holy Spirit* therefore, That which the Scripture teaches us, is *This* only; That He is a Divine Person, in an ineffable manner deriving his Being, proceeding from, or being sent forth from, the Father; *whereby* he is, and *upon which account* he is styled, in a singular and peculiar manner, *The Spirit of God*. And because

S E R M. cause after the Ascension of Christ, the Gifts distributed by the same Spirit, were, according to the Promise of the Father, poured forth in *much greater plenty and abundance* than before; therefore he is frequently styled likewise, *The Spirit of Christ*: And before that *Jesus* was glorified, it is affirmed therefore of the same Spirit in the Gospel, (comparatively to that *much larger Effusion* which was to follow after,) that he *was not yet given* at all, St. *John* vii. 39; In which Passage it is very remarkable, that the words in the Original are, *The Holy Ghost was not yet*; meaning, *was not yet given*; just as in the Text the Disciples are said *not to have heard whether there was any Holy Ghost*; meaning, that they had not heard whether he was yet *given*. There have been *Some*, both in Antient and Modern times, who have taught that the *Holy Ghost* was nothing but a *mere Power*, and Operation or Action of the Father: But though it is True, that *Powers* are indeed sometimes in Scripture, according to the nature of the *Jewish* Language, spoken of figuratively as *Persons*; yet in the present case it is plain, on the contrary, that the *Person* of the Holy Spirit is often represented and spoken of as the *Power* of the Father, only because *By Him* it is that the Father works all Miracles and bestows all Gifts. Nor can those Texts be understood any otherwise, than of a real Person, in which it is expressed that *He*, (in the original it is, *That Person*;) *the Spirit of*

Truth

Truth is come, John xvi. 13; that he maketh in-
tercession for us, Rom. viii. 26; that he divideth
spiritual Gifts, to every one severally as he willeth,
1 Cor. xii. 11; and that he shall not speak of him-
self, but what he shall hear, or receive from the
Father, That shall he speak; John xvi. 13. These,
and other the like Texts, do plainly declare the
Holy Spirit to be, not a mere Power or Opera-
tion, but a real Person sent forth from the Father
and the Son, for the perpetual Government and
Direction of the Church.

In which Mission, the several Offices which
the Scripture teaches us he performs, are as fol-
lows; that it was He who inspired the Prophets
of old, to testify before-hand the Sufferings of
Christ, and the Glory that should follow: that
he was afterwards sent forth in a more particular
and extraordinary manner, to be the Comforter,
Director, and Guide of the Apostles; to lead
them into all Truth; to bring to their remem-
brance all things whatsoever Christ had before
said unto them; to support them against the
Power of the World; to instruct them what to
answer to their Persecutors; to be the great
Witness of our Saviour's Resurrection, by work-
ing Signs, and Wonders, and mighty Works, by
inspiring the Apostles with the Gift of Tongues,
and dividing to their Followers Diversities of
Gifts; Finally, to continue with all good Chri-
stians even unto the End of the World, as the
great Sanctifier of the Hearts of Men; sancti-
fying

SERM.
XIV.

S E R M. fying them, not by working upon them mechanically as Machines, but by moral Motives as rational Beings; assisting them with his Grace, admonishing them with his Holy Influences, working with them and inspiring them with his good Gifts, and helping the Infirmary of their Prayers with an Energy that cannot be expressed.

3. HAVING thus briefly discoursed concerning the *Nature*, and *Offices* and *Gifts* of the Spirit; the *Application* of what has been said, is, what *Returns* we are bound to make for the Benefit of those divine Gifts bestowed upon us. And 1st, It will become us to return continual and hearty Thanks to *God*, as the original Author and Fountain of all Good: because it is *He*, who has thus *given* unto us *His* Holy Spirit; 1 *Theff.* iv. 8. and who has *sent forth* the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts; *Gal.* iv. 6. 2^{dly}, As we are to return hearty Thanks for the Gifts already received, so we are continually to pray to God in the whole course of our Lives, that *this* his Holy Spirit, into whose Name we were at first baptized, *i. e.* dedicated wholly to his Guidance and Direction in the work of our Salvation; may never be withdrawn from us, but may continue to guide us by his perpetual influence, communion and fellowship. 3^{dly}, With regard to the Holy Spirit himself, it becomes us to endeavour to frame right and worthy Notions concerning him; that we acknowledge him to be the Inspirer of the Prophets and

and Apostles; the Author and Worker of all S E R M.
Signs and Miracles; the Sanctifier of all Hearts, XIV.

and the Distributer of all spiritual Gifts: that we believe and receive his Testimony, as delivered by the inspired Writers; that we obey his good Motions; be solicitous to obtain his Gifts and Graces; and infinitely careful not to grieve and quench and drive him from us, lest we be found to do despite unto the Spirit of Grace; which in Scripture is represented as a more unpardonable fault, than offending against the Person even of our Saviour himself. *How is it* (says the Apostle) *that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?* Acts v. 19. To tempt; that is, in Scripture-language, to provoke him: *In the day of Temptation in the Wilderness, when your Fathers tempted me*; the meaning is, provoked me to Anger; Psalm xcvi. 9. Again, *Ephes. iv. 30. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of Redemption*: The word, *sealed*, is a figurative expression; the meaning of which may be understood from *Rev. vii. 3. Hurt not the Earth* — 'till we have sealed the Servants of our God in their Foreheads, *i. e.* distinguished them by a peculiar mark, in order to preserve them from a general destruction. In Allusion to which, good Christians are said to *be sealed by the Spirit unto the day of Redemption*; *i. e.* distinguished by the Fruits of the Spirit, in order to be delivered from the Wrath to come. And in pursuance of this figure, is the like expression, 2 Cor. i. 22. *Who*

S E R M. hath also sealed us, and given the Earnest (in the original it is, the Pledge or Token) of the Spirit in our Hearts: And, 2 Tim. ii. 19. *The Foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, and, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity.*

T H E R E is one thing more upon this Head, which deserves particular observation, wherewith I shall conclude: And that is, that following the Guidance of the Spirit, is not following Enthusiastick Imaginations; but taking care to obey the Doctrine which the Spirit inspired. The *Apostles* were directed by a miraculous Assistance of the Spirit, upon every particular occasion: But we have *now* no promise of any such miraculous direction: Obeying the Spirit *now*, is nothing else but obeying his dictates, as set down in the inspired Writings: And to enable us to do this, we *may*, upon our sincere endeavours, expect his continual Blessing and Assistance.

SERMON XV.

Of the Power and Authority of
CHRIST.

[Preached on Trinity-Sunday.]

St. MATTH. xxviii. part of ver. 18, 19, 20.

*All power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth:
Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even unto the End of the World.*

OUR Saviour in his last Discourse with SERM.
his Disciples *before* his suffering; after XV.
he had instituted the Sacrament of the
Lord's Supper, and was going out with them to-
wards the *Mount of Olives* in order to be be-
trayed: and had warned them of their approach-
ing Sorrow, ch. xxvi. 31; *All ye shall be offended
because of Me this Night; for it is written, I will*

SERM. smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep of the Flock shall
 XV. be scattered abroad; proceeds in the next verse

to allay their Grief, and support them against Despair, by giving them a remore prospect of Light after Darkneſs, and of Comfort that ſhould ſucceed That melancholy Scene: *But after I am riſen again*, ſaith he, *I will go before you into Galilee.* What he intended to Do in Galilee, he did not then think fit to explain to them more diſtinctly: But Galilee being the place wherein they had uſed to converſe moſt freely with him, and where they had with pleaſure heard the greateſt part of his divine Diſcourſes; it gave them a general Hope or Expectation, that after the preſent Time of Trouble, and after their leaving *Jeruſalem*, the conſtant place of Perſecution; when he ſhould be riſen again, (the meaning of which, whether it was literal or only figurative, they ſeemed not then fully to underſtand; but when it were fulfilled,) they thought they ſhould again converſe with him freely and ſafely, in their ancient places of retirement in Galilee.

AFTER his Reſurrection, This Promise was renewed and confirmed to them, by the Angel appearing to the Women at the Sepulchre, and ſaying, *Mark xvi. 7; Go, — tell his Diſciples, — that he goeth before you into Galilee; there ſhall ye ſee him, as he ſaid unto you.* And the Fulfilling of it, is recorded in the words immediately before the Text; *Then the eleven Diſciples went away into Galilee, into a Mountain where Jeſus*

Jesus had appointed them; And there they saw him, S E R M. — and he spake unto them. What it was that XV.

he spake unto them; or what the Design was, of his meeting them there; St. Luke tells us, Acts i. 2; He gave Commandments unto the Apostles whom he had chosen, and spake to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; He gave them full instructions concerning the Nature of his spiritual Kingdom, which, before his Resurrection they did not rightly understand; and, in several Conversations during the forty days between his Resurrection and Ascension, he furnished them with all proper Directions relating to the Doctrine of the Gospel, which they were to preach and propagate over the whole World. A Summary or short Abridgment of which Instructions, is delivered down to us in the Words of the Text: *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth: Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.*

THE words contain in brief, the whole System of Christian Doctrine: And, for Method's sake, we may observe in them distinctly the following particulars; 1st, *An Account of the Extent of our Saviour's Power*; that he is invested with All Power, both in Heaven and Earth. 2^{dly}, *A Declaration, of the Original of that unlimited Power*

S E R M. and Authority; *All Power*, saith he, is given
 XV. *me, i. e. from the Father.* 3dly, *The Commission*
 he thereupon grants his Disciples; *Go Ye there-*
fore, and teach all Nations; 4thly, *The Doctrine,*
 which all Nations were to be taught, and into
 which they were to be baptized; *Baptizing them*
in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of
the Holy Ghost. 5thly, *The Practice,* of those
 who were to be baptized into this Faith; *Teach-*
ing them to observe all things whatsoever I have
commanded you; And Lastly, *The Promise of ef-*
fectual Assistance, to the Disciples sent forth upon
This Commission; *And lo, I am with you always,*
even unto the End of the World.

1st, HERE is an Account, of the *Extent* of our
 Saviour's Power and Authority; that he is in-
 vested with *All Power*, both in *Heaven and Earth.*
 The *Jews*, in their expectations of the Messiah,
 imagined to themselves the Character of a Tem-
 poral Prince, who should deliver them from the
 Yoke of their Enemies, and reduce all the World
 under their Dominion; who should *subdue the*
People under them, and the Nations under their
Feet: who should *choose out an Heritage* for them,
even the Excellency of Jacob whom he loved; Ps.
 xlvii. 3. And *This* indeed our Saviour *has be-*
gun, and will continue to accomplish; according
 to the *True Intent* of the Prophecy, though not
 after the manner of *Their Interpretation.* Unto
 Isa. ix. 6. *Them, though they know it not, a Child is*
born; unto Them, a Son is given; and the govern-
 ment

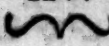
ment is upon his Shoulder; and his Name Is Won-
 derful, Counsellor, The Mighty God; (Not, the
 everlasting Father; For it is the Son here spoken
 of, and not the Father everlasting; But) the Go-
 vernor, the Father or Lord of the Age to come,
 (so the Phrase ought to be rendered;) The Prince
 of Peace: And he shall reign over the House of
 Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no
 end. The Jews, at the time of our Lord's ap-
 pearing in the Flesh were extremely disappointed
 and prejudiced against him; because his seeming
 meanness fell so much short of that Grandeur,
 wherein they expected their Messiah should have
 shown himself: And yet in reality his True Power
 and Authority was as much Superiour even to
 that expected Grandeur; as his seeming Meanness,
 for which they despised him, was inferior to it.
 They expected a Temporal Deliverer, and he pro-
 posed to them a Salvation eternal: They looked
 for a Prince of Men, and he appeared to be the
 Lord of Angels: They expected a Messiah endu-
 ed with great Power on Earth, and he showed
 himself to be invested with All Power both in
 Earth and Heaven. Thus did the Wisdom of
 God put to silence the ignorance of foolish men;
 And while the Lovers of Worldly Grandeur
 despised and reviled our Lord for his appearing
 Meanness; under that Meanness there lay con-
 cealed, and to all well-disposed Persons (who
 looked for Redemption in Israel) there discovered
 itself a Power, infinitely superior even to the
 highest

S E R M. highest Expectations, of those whose Hearts were

XV. bent on nothing but Worldly Greatness. *Of the depth of the Riches both of the Knowledge and Wisdom of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Our Saviour, as he ministred to the Father in creating the World; (For by Him, the Scripture declares, God created all things;) So in governing the World, he likewise supports all things by the Word of his Power: He does what he pleases, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth; He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and judges, punishes, or rewards, as he pleases: For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickneth them; even so the Son quickneth whom he willet; St. John v. 21. He searches the Hearts and Reins, and declares that he will give to every man according to his Work, Rev. ii. 23. He hath the Keys of Hell and of Death, Rev. i. 18; the Key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; Rev. iii. 7. The words are of the same import with those in Job, ch. xii. 14, where compleat and irresistible Power is thus described; Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening: And they are an Application of that ancient Prophecy, to our Saviour; Is. xxii. 22: The Key of the House of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.*

AND

AND This, as it is a full Declaration of the SERM.
Extent of our Saviour's Power, that it is universal, XV.
 All Power both in Heaven and Earth; which was
 the *first*, particular observable in the Text; so it
 leads us in the 2d place, to the consideration of
 the *Original* of this unlimited Power and Autho-
 rity. *I will lay upon his shoulder the Key of the*
House of David, I will invest him with All Pow-
er, saith God in the Prophecy; And, at the Ac-
complishment of the Prophecy, All Power is Given
unto me, saith our Saviour in the Text; i. e. giv-
en unto me by the Father. Underived Power,
 is peculiar to the Person of the Father; the in-
 communicable Property of Him alone, *who is*
made of None, neither created, nor begotten, nor
proceeding, nor in any manner whatsoever derived
from Another. All Power is derivative from
Him; derivative from the Father, to the Son;
 and from the Son, by the Spirit, to all Creatures.
 In our Saviour therefore, is vested all Dominion
 and Authority; because *in Him dwelleth the Ful-*
ness of the Godhead, (the Fulness of Divine Pow-
 er, the Glory of the Father,) *bodily, visibly,* as
 in the Person of a Man: And therefore he is
 styled, *the Image of the invisible God;* because
 (as the Apostle expresses it,) *it pleased the Father,*
that in him should all Fulness, the Fulness of all
 Power, *dwell.* This is, in a most lively Figure,
 represented to us by the Prophet Daniel, ch. vii.
 13; *I saw in the Night-visions, and behold, One*
like the Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Hea-
ven,

SER.M. *ven, and came to the Antient of Days, and they*
XV. *brought him near before him; And there was given*
 *him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom; that*
all people, nations, and languages should serve him;
His Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which
shall not pass away; and his Kingdom, that which
shall not be destroyed. And the Expressions in the
New Testament, wherein is recorded the Fulfilling
of this Prophetick Vision, are exactly agreeable
to it. The Angel at the Annunciation, thus de-
clares concerning him, before his Conception,
He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the
Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him
the Throne of his Father David; and he shall reign
over the House of Jacob for ever, Luke i. 32.
Concerning Himself he professes accordingly,
Matth. xi. 27; All things are delivered unto me
of my Father; And again, John xiii. 3; Know-
ing that the Father had given all things into his
hands: And yet more expressly, John v. 22; The
Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all
judgment unto the Son: and ver. 26; As the Father
hath Life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son
to have Life in Himself: And hath given him Au-
thority to execute judgment also, because he is the
Son of Man: and ver. 19; Verily I say unto you,
The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he
seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doth,
these also doth the Son likewise. In the same man-
 ner with these declarations of our Lord concern-
 ing himself, do the Apostles also speak of Him in
 their

their Epistles. *Whom God hath appointed* S E R M.
of all things, saith St. Paul, Heb. i. 2. and ch. XV.
 ii. 8 ; *Thou hast put all things in Subjection under*
his Feet. And still more largely and particularly,
Phil. ii. 9 ; Wherefore God also has highly exalted
him, and given him a Name which is above every
Name ; that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall
bow, (should become subject to His Dominion,) of things in Heaven, and things in Earth ; and
things under the Earth ; And that every tongue shall
confess (in acknowledgment of That Subjection,) that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Fa-
ther ; and Eph. i. 20 ; he raised Christ from the
dead, and set him at his own right hand in the bea-
venly places ; Far above all Principalities and Pow-
ers, and Might and Dominion, and every Name
that is named, not only in this World, but also in
that which is to come ; And hath put all things un-
der his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all
things to the Church. And accordingly upon ac-
 count of this derivation of our Lord's Power, by
 way of Delegation from the Father, it is, that
 the same Apostle declares ; 1 Cor. xv. 24 ; that
 at the End, he shall deliver up again the Kingdom
 to God, even the Father, when he shall have put
 down all Rule and all Authority and Power : For
 — when he saith, *All things are put under him,*
 it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all
 things under him ; And when all things shall be sub-
 dued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be sub-
 ject

SER. M. *ject unto Him that put all things under him; that*

XV. *God (even the Father) may be all in all.* It may here justly be thought a Difficulty, how in *This* place it is declared, that our Lord shall at *the End deliver up the Kingdom to the Father*; and yet in *other* Passages before-mentioned it is expressly affirmed, that *he shall rule for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no End.* But the Answer is obvious; that, when it is said, *his Kingdom shall have no End,* and that *it is a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed*; the meaning is, that it shall never be prevailed over by any *opposite* Power, but shall subdue all things to itself; In which Subjection of *all things* to him, it is yet manifest

1 Cor. xv. 27. that *He* cannot be included, by whose original Power they were *All* made subject to him: But as our Lord was at first sent forth by the good Pleasure of the Father, so unto Him shall he at last return again; and when, by the Power of Judgment committed unto him, he shall have *brought many Sons unto glory*, he shall, together with *Them*, deliver up again the *Power itself* also into the hands of the Father, when he *presents them faultless before the presence of his glory*, and instates them in the eternal Kingdom of their heavenly Father: In which Kingdom of the Father, He himself shall continue to *reign* over them that are saved, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, for ever and ever. The Socinian Writers, from these and some other the like Texts of Scripture, have *very unreasonably* presumed to collect,

collect, that our Saviour was no greater a Person S E R M. XV.
 than a mere Man, born of the Virgin *Mary* without any former Existence, and exalted by the Power of God to this State of Dignity in Heaven: But This their Inference (I say) is *very unreasonable*: For though the Derivation of our Lord's Power from the Father, must and ought to be acknowledged; that all mens *confessing Jesus to be Lord*, may be (as St. Paul directs) *to the glory of God the Father*; yet from those other Texts of Scripture, wherein it is affirmed that *by Christ God created all things*; that he was in the *Form of God*, before he appeared in the *Form of a Servant*; that he *was with God*, and *had Glory with God before the World was*; from these Texts, I say, it undeniably appears, that our Lord's having *all Power*, given him both in Heaven and Earth, cannot signify the *original Exaltation*, of One who had no Being before he was born of the Virgin; but the Exaltation of *Him* into the Form of God, who voluntarily emptied himself of that Glory he had *before*, and with unparalleled Humility took upon himself the Form of a Servant, and suffered in that Form for our Sakes; and *Therefore was worthy to receive Power* Rev. v. ver. 9. and 12,
and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour, and glory and blessing, because he *was slain, and redeemed us to God by his own Blood, out of every Tongue and Kindred and People and Nation*.

3dly, THE next thing observable in the Text, is the *Commission* our Saviour grants his Disciples, upon

S E R M. upon his having received all Power in Heaven
 XV. and Earth: Go Ye, therefore, *and Teach all Na-*
tions. The Word, *therefore* is the Ascertain-
 ing of *Their* Authority, from the Security of his
own. All Power is given unto *Me*; Go Ye
 therefore, and teach all Nations. This particu-
 lar is more fully expressed by St. *John*, ch. xx.
 21; *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you:*
— whosesoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto
them; and whosesoever Sins ye retain, they are retain-
ed: Not that the Apostles were intrusted with
 any Power, to pardon or condemn any man ac-
 cording to their *own Pleasure*: For *This* even
 our Saviour *himself*, does only according to the
 Will of the Father which sent him: But the
 meaning is, that they were intrusted to preach
That Doctrine of Repentance, by the Terms of
 which it was to be determined, *whose* Sins should
 be pardoned and *whose* retained. A like Expres-
 sion is used by our Saviour to St. *Peter*, Matth.
 xvi. 19; *I will give unto thee the Keys of the King-*
dom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on
Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever
thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven:
 Not that St. *Peter*, or Any, or All the Apostles,
 had Power to let whom they pleased into Heaven;
 but that they were appointed and commissioned
 to preach *That* Doctrine, by the Terms of which
 Men were to be admitted into, or excluded out
 of Heaven.

Go ye, and Teach all Nations: The Word, SERM.
Teach, signifies in the original, *Make Disciples*: XV.
 In like manner, as *Acts* xiv. 21; *When they had*
preached the Gospel to that City, and had Taught
many; in the original it is, *and had made many*
Disciples.

TEACH, All Nations: The words, *All Na-*
tions, signify primarily, the Nations of the Ro-
 man Empire; and then, in a larger Sense, all the Rom. x.
 Kingdoms of the World. In *St. Mark* it is, 18.
Preach the Gospel to every Creature. And, in the Mar. xvi.
15. first chapter to the *Colossians*, what in the 6th verse
 is expressed, the Gospel came into *All the World*,
 is at the 23d verse said to have been *preached to*
every Creature under Heaven. The meaning
 of which is so obvious, that it would hardly
 need to be mentioned, but that it helps to illu-
 strate a more difficult passage in the viiith to the
Romans; where, when the Apostle had said at the
 21st verse, *The creature itself also shall be delivered*
from the bondage of Corruption, into the glorious
Liberty of the children of God: He adds, ver. 23;
And not only they, but ourselves also which have
the First-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves
groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to
wit, the Redemption of our Body. So that the
 words, *Creature* or *whole Creation*, seem to signi-
 fy those many Nations, or the *Bulk* of Mankind,
 to whom the Gospel was afterwards to be preach-
 ed; in contradistinction to the *First-fruits*, who
 received it in the Apostle's Time.

4thly,

SERM.

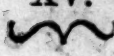
XV.

ably, HERE is the *Doftrine*, which all Nations were to be taught, and into which they were to be Baptized; *Baptizing them, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* This is that brief Summary of Christian Faith, which in the Apostle's Time, Men were taught, and professed, and had explained to them at their Baptism; and the Explication of it was afterwards well expressed in that *Form of Sound Words*, which is now usually called the *Apostles Creed*. To be Baptized in the Name of the *Father*, is to profess our Belief (as St. Paul words it) in the *One God and Father of all, who is Above All, and Through All, and In All*, even the *Father Almighty, the Maker, and Lord, and Supreme Governour* of all things. To be Baptized in the Name of the *Son*, is to profess our Belief likewise in the *One Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, the Messiah* that was to come, the Redeemer and Saviour of Mankind, the Author and Purchaser of Forgiveness to Sinners, or of the Acceptation of Repentance through his Blood; our great High Priest or Intercessor with God, and by the Appointment of the Father, our Judge at the last day. To be baptized in the Name of the *Son*, signifies also further, to be Baptized *into his Death*:
 Col. ii. 12. *Know ye not, saith St. Paul, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death?* Rom. vi. 3. And what *That* means, he tells us in the following verse; *We*
 are

are buried with him by Baptism into Death, (that S E R M. the Body of Sin might be destroyed, ver. 6;) XV.

that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so We also should walk in newness of Life. Lastly, To be baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost, signifies our Acknowledging the Holy Spirit of God, to be the Inspirer of the Apostles and Prophets; the Comforter, and the Director of Christians; that we submit ourselves to his Holy Guidance, receive the Doctrine inspired by him into the Apostles and Prophets, expect to be justified from our John iii. 3. 5. past Sins by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 15. and to be preserved from Sin for the future by Tit. iii. 1. his Sanctification and Assistance; that we obey his good motions, take great care not to grieve or quench and drive him from us; and, forasmuch as by one Spirit we are all baptized into one 1 Cor. xii. 13. Body, — and have been all made to drink into one

Spirit, that therefore we endeavour by mutual Charity and Forbearance, to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. This is the Meaning, of being baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with respect to the several Offices of these three Divine Persons, in which Regard it is that the Scripture always speaks of them: As to their Metaphysical Nature; the Vanity of Men, speculating about That beyond what is written, has been the Occasion of many foolish Errors: Some have imagined three co-ordinate Beings, which is the Impiety of Polytheism

S E R M. *lytheism*, and directly contrary to that Fundamental Article, the Unity of God : Others have
 XV.  contended, that they are one Person only, with three Modes or Denominations ; Which is the Herefy of *Sabellianism*, and destroys the Personality both of the Son and Holy Spirit : Some, in the contrary extreme, forsaking likewise the Phrases of Scripture, having presumed to affirm, that there was a Time, when the Son and Holy Spirit had no Being, and were made out of Nothing even as the meanest of Creatures : which was the notion of *Arius* : And Others, diminishing yet further the Dignity of our Saviour's Person, have made him a mere man, and denied his having any Being before he was born of the Virgin ; Which is the Error of *Socinus*. And now among this multiplicity of Errors, how shall a sincere and unlearned Christian behave himself ? Why, His Rule is ; Let him not follow vain men, in being Wise beyond what is written ; but let him adhere to what he finds plainly and expressly delivered in Scripture : And This, as far as possible, in the very Scripture-Terms ; always remembring, where That cannot be done, yet so to understand all Phrases of human Composition, as to mean neither more nor less than the Scripture-Expressions. Now that which the Scripture declares concerning this Matter, is This : When one of the Scribes asked our Saviour, *Which is the first Commandment of all ?* *Jesus answered him, The first of all the Commandments*

is; Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: SERM.
 To which the Scribe replied, Well, Master, thou XV.
hast said the Truth; For there is one God, and there
is none other but He; Mark xii. 29, 32: and
1 Cor. viii. 6; To Us there is but One God, the Fa-
ther, of whom are all things: and Eph. iv. 6;
One God and Father of All, who is above All, and
through All, and in you All. Yet the same Scrip-
 ture does likewise expressly affirm, that the Son
 also is God; and to the *Holy Spirit* it ascribes
 Divine Powers and Attributes: How Then shall
 This be reconciled? Plainly Thus: The Power
 and Authority of the Son and Holy Spirit, is
 neither *Another* Power and Authority, *opposite*
 to that of the Father; nor *Another* Power and
 Authority, *co-ordinate* to that of the Father;
 But it is *His* Power and Authority, communi-
 cated to Them, manifested in them, and exer-
 cised by them: And so there is plainly preserv-
 ed both an Unity of Power, and a Monarchy of
 Government in the Universe.

5thly, To the *Form* of Baptism, our Saviour adds
 in the Text, the *Practice* of those who are to be bap-
 tized into This Faith. *Teaching them to Observe all*
things whatsoever I have commanded you. And This,
 is the Great End and Use of the whole. As Faith
 without *Works* is dead; so *Baptism* without the
Answer of a good Conscience towards God, is
 but the *Washing away of the Filth of the Flesh.* 1 Pet. iii. 21.
 He that is baptized, must put off, concerning the Heb. x.
former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt 22.
Eph. v.

S E R M. according to the deceitful lusts ; and be renewed in
 XV. the Spirit of his mind ; and put on the new man,
 which after God is created in Righteousness and true
 Holiness ; Eph. iv. 22. He must, as St. Paul
 Rom. xiii. elsewhere expresses it, put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

4.

Gal. iii. 27 ; As many of you as have been baptiz-
 ed into Christ, have put on Christ. The Mean-
 ing is : He that is baptiz'd into the Religion of
 Christ, must conform himself to the same pat-
 tern, must observe all things whatsoever He has
 commanded Us, must obey his Laws delivered in
 the Gospel ; otherwise his Baptism is vain, and
 his Profession but Hypocrisy.

6thly and Lastly, HERE is the Promise of an
 effectual Assistance, to the Disciples sent forth upon
 This Commission : And, lo, I am with you al-
 ways even unto the End of the World. Being with
 them always, 'tis evident did not signify his con-
 tinuing personally with them ; For this Promise
 was made to them at the very Time, when he
 had declared he was about to leave them and as-
 cend unto the Father. But it signifies, that he
 would continue with them by the guidance and
 direction of his Spirit ; which was in effect the
 same thing, as continuing with them himself.
 Thus God is in Scripture said to dwell in us
 Himself, when he dwells in us by his Spirit ; and
 he that lies to the Spirit of God, is justly accused
 of lying consequently to God Himself ; and he
 who rejects the preaching of an Apostle, is charg-
 ed

Eph. ii.
 22.

Acts v. 4.

ed with rejecting *Christ*; and he that rejects *Christ*, S E R M.
with rejecting *God Himself* who sent him, XV.

CHRIST's being with his Disciples *to the End* of the World therefore, is his being with them by his Spirit. And this imports two things: 1st, His giving them the Holy Ghost at *Pentecost*, to inspire them with the Doctrine of Truth, and to enable them to confirm that Doctrine with miraculous Gifts; according to the promise; St. Mark xvi. 17. *These Signs shall follow them that believe; In my Name shall they cast out Devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up Serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.* And 2dly it implies, that, after this Foundation of the Church, by the teaching and Miracles of the inspired Apostles; the Blessing of Providence, and the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, should continue to preserve it; not by raising up infallible Guides and unerring human Authority, which never was in any others than the Apostles themselves; but by supporting the Doctrine once delivered by the Apostles, against all the Violence and Frauds of its Opposers. *Thou art Peter*, says our Saviour, that is, *a Rock*; and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell, i. e. Persecution and even Death itself, (for so the words properly signify) shall not be able to prevail against it; Matth. xvi. 18. And what is meant by St. Peter's being *a Rock*, or *Stone*, upon which the Church is built, is explained, Eph. ii.

278 *Of the Power and Authority of Christ.*

SERM. 20. where the Church is compared to a Building,

XV. the Apostles to Foundation-stones, and our Saviour himself to the Head of the Building: *Ye are built, saith St. Paul, upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone; In whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto a Holy Temple in the Lord; In whom you also are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

SER.

S E R M O N X V I .

Of the different Gifts of the Spirit.

[*Preached on Trinity Sunday.*]

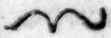
I C O R . xii . 4 , 5 , 6 .

Now there are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of Administrations, but the same Lord; And there are diversities of Operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all.

IN these Words we have a distinct Account of S E R M .
three Divine Persons, concerned in bringing X V I .
about the Salvation of Men; and a brief Declaration of the Nature of their several Offices, in accomplishing that great and merciful Design. There are in the *first* place Gifts of Miracles, of Signs and Wonders, for the Conviction of Infidels; and there are Gifts of Grace, of virtuous and holy Dispositions, for the Sanctification and Improvement of Believers; and these are constantly ascribed in Scripture to the *Spirit of God*, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter: *There are diversities*

SERMON. *ties of Gifts; but the same Spirit.* There is in the

XVI. 2^d place, a wonderful Oeconomy in the Establishment and Government of the Church: Mankind was to be redeemed from the Power of Satan, and the Repentance of Sinners made acceptable before God, and available to the obtaining of Pardon, consistently with the Justice, and Wisdom, and Honour of the Laws of God; by the offering up of a sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World: This Doctrine was to be revealed unto Men; and a Church gathered out of the whole World, of such as should embrace and obey this Revelation: An Order and Government was to be established, for the propagating this Church and conveying down this Doctrine by a perpetual Succession, even unto the End of the World: Perpetual Intercession was to be made to God, by a sinless High Priest, to make the Prayers of frail and sinful Men acceptable in the Sight of Him, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity: A Resurrection of the Dead was to be appointed, a final Judgment passed, and a just and impartial Retribution made to every man according to his Works: And these things are all ascribed in Scripture to the *Son of God*, even our Lord Jesus Christ; who, before his Incarnation, was the Word of the Father, the Angel of his Presence, the Brightness of his Glory, the express Image of his Person; and after his Incarnation, was the Redeemer and Saviour, the Mediator and Intercessor,

cessor, the Lord and Judge of Mankind: *There* SERM.
are differences of Administrations, says the Apostle, XVI.
but the same Lord. There is, in the 3d and last 
 place, a Supreme and Absolute, a self-original,
 underived and independent Authority; from
 whence all these things primarily and originally
 proceed, and to which the Glory of them must
 finally and ultimately be referred: And this is in
 Scripture constantly ascribed to *God*, even the
 Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the First
 and Supreme Author of every good Gift; by
 whose good pleasure, our Lord himself was sent
 forth to redeem us; and the Holy Spirit given, to
 sanctify us; *There are Diversities of Operations,*
but it is the same God, which worketh all in all:
 Or, as the same Apostle elsewhere expresses it;
Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things,
to whom be Glory and Dominion for ever. This is
 the Account the Scripture gives us, of the several
 Offices of these three Divine Persons. *There*
are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; and
there are differences of Administrations, but the same
Lord; and there are Diversities of Operations, but
it is the same God, that worketh all in all. It is
God, by whose supreme Authority every thing in
 the Universe is directed; it is the *Son of God*, by
 whom the Government of the Church in particu-
 lar is administred; it is the *Spirit of God*, by
 whom all Gifts and Graces, for the Conviction of
 Infidels, and for the Sanctification of Believers,
 are dispensed. The *God and Father* of our Lord
 Jesus

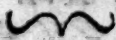
S E R M. Jesus Christ, the infinite and incomprehensible
 XVI. Fountain of underived Majesty, is the Spring and
 ~~~~~ Original of all Good: The *Son of the Father*, is  
 to Us the Author and Purchaser, the Conveyer  
 of all *Communications* from that inexhaustible  
 Fountain of Goodness; and by his Mediation and  
 Intercession, the only Means of *Access and Ap-  
 proach* to that Throne of otherwise inaccessible  
 Glory: The *Spirit of God*, sent forth from the  
 Father and the Son, is the immediate Dispenser  
 and Distributer of those Benefits, which the Fa-  
 ther grants by the Intercession of the Son.

T H I S is what the Scripture clearly and ex-  
 pressly declares to us, concerning the Father,  
 the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In which Doctrine,  
 because there are some things difficult to be un-  
 derstood, and not needful to be explained; where-  
 in the vain Curiosity of Men has often exposed its  
 own Weakness, and which profane and careless  
 persons have wrested (as they do other Doctrines)  
 to their own Destruction; therefore this matter  
 ought not to be frequently and slightly treated of;  
 but upon the most solemn Occasions, with the  
 greatest Care, and with the utmost Reverence.  
 And upon such Occasions; since the whole ground  
 and foundation of the Christian Religion, is the Be-  
 lief of our Reconciliation to God, the Father and  
 supreme Lord of All, through the Death of his  
 Son, and by the Influence of his Holy Spirit; and  
 since *This is Life eternal, to know Him who is the  
 only true God*, and to know *Jesus Christ whom he*  
 has

*has sent*, and the *Spirit* by whom he worketh in SERM.  
us every good Work: Since this, I say, is the XVI.  
very Foundation of Christian Religion; to have  
a right Knowledge, of Him who is the Creator  
of the Universe, and supreme Lord of the whole  
World; of him, who is the Saviour and Redeemer  
of Mankind; and of him, who is the Sanctifier  
of the elect People, which is the Church of God:  
it is therefore very fit, that upon particular so-  
lemn Occasions, this great Doctrine, which ought  
not to be frequently and slightly handled, should  
with great Caution and Reverence be *explained* at  
once: *Explained*; that is, not unfolded according  
to the presumptions of human Imagination; but  
*declared* so far, as it is expressly revealed in Scrip-  
ture; and so far forth, as it is therefore intelligible,  
because it is revealed. For in Doctrines which  
are not made known by the Light of Reason and  
natural Understanding, but discovered merely by  
Revelation, and which depend wholly on the Au-  
thority and Testimony of the Revealer; in these  
things, human Imagination has no place, and the  
Opinion of no man is of any Importance, but  
only the express Words of the Revelation itself.  
In declaring therefore unto you, that which is  
clearly and without all controversy revealed in  
Scripture concerning the Father, the Son, and  
the Holy Ghost; I shall 1<sup>st</sup> consider briefly that  
which is *speculative*, concerning their *Nature*;  
2<sup>dly</sup>, That which is *moral*, relating to their *Offices*;  
and,



S E R M. and 3dly, That which is *practical*, concerning the  
 XVI. Honour we are to pay unto them.



1st, I shall consider what is spoken in a *speculative* manner concerning their *Nature*. And this part being that, wherein we are least concerned, and which we are least capable to understand; the Scripture is very brief in this particular: It being of much more importance that it should be clearly revealed to us, what they are *relatively to Us*, than what their Nature is *absolutely in themselves*. Yet even upon this Head we find in Scripture, as follows. Concerning the Nature of *God the Father*: that, agreeable to the Light of natural Reason, there is One supreme absolute independent Cause and Original of all things, Eternal, Infinite, All-powerful, Self-sufficient; the Maker and Lord of all things, himself derived from none, made of none, begotten of none, proceeding from none: By whom all Creatures, material and immaterial, visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, mortal and immortal, in Heaven and in Earth were made; by whom the Land and Waters, the Air and Sun and Stars, the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens, and all things that are therein; Plants, and Beasts, and Men; Angels and Arch-Angels; were *created* out of nothing: *From* whom the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter and Sanctifier of all Holy Men, *proceedeth*, or is sent forth; *Of* whom, lastly, the Son himself, the Saviour and Redeemer of the World, in an ineffable manner, before

before all Ages was *begotten*. This is the supreme S E R M.  
 Father and Lord of all, who dwelleth in Light XVI.  
 inaccessible; whose Majesty, no Thought can   
 comprehend; whose Glory, no Eye can behold;  
 whose Power, no Strength can resist; from whose  
 Presence, no Swiftneſs can flee; whose Know-  
 ledge, no Secrecy can conceal itſelf from; whose  
 Juſtice, no Art can evade; whose Goodneſs, no  
 Creature but partakes of. This is the God of  
 the Univerſe, whom even the Heathen World  
 has always acknowledged. This is the God of  
*Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*; the God who brought  
 the Children of *Iſrael* out of the Land of *Egypt*;  
 the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; of  
 whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all  
 things; to whom be Glory and Dominion for  
 ever. But to proceed.

CONCERNING the *Nature* of the *Son*, that which  
 the Scripture declares to us, (and otherwiſe than  
 from Scripture we can have no Light, in matters  
 of Revelation;) That which the Scripture, I ſay,  
 declares to us, is this: That in the Beginning,  
 before the Foundation of the World, before all  
 Ages, that Divine Perſon, who after, and by his  
 Incarnation, became our Lord and Saviour Jeſus  
 Chriſt, had a Being in the Boſom of his Father,  
 and was Partaker of his Father's Glory. *In the* John i. 1.  
*Beginning was the Word; and the Word was with*  
*God, i. e. was with the Father; and the Word was*  
*God, i. e. was Partaker of his Father's Glory, of*  
 his Divine Power and Authority, in creating and  
 govern-

S E R M. governing the World. The Reason why this Divine Person was styled *the Word*, has been much disputed by Divines; and various Opinions have at different Times prevailed. That which is most probable and most agreeable to the Scriptures, is, that he was so called, upon account of his being as it were the Mouth or Oracle of God, the Angel of his Presence, the great Declarer of his Will, the Mediator between God and his Creatures; by and thro' whom, as all Creatures have Access to God, and give Glory to him: so thro' him likewise are derived and conveyed all Communications of God to his Creatures. *In the Beginning was the Word*: That *Word*, which afterwards *was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us*; to reveal to us with Authority the whole Will of God: That *Word*, concerning whom the same Author St. John thus speaks in another place; when in his

Rev. xix. Vision, seeing the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*,  
 16. coming forth *in righteousness to judge and to make*  
 11. *war, and to tread the wine-press of the wrath of*  
 15. *Almighty God*; he thus describes him; that *out of*  
 15. *his mouth goeth a sharp sword, and his Name is*  
 13. *called, The Word of God*; and ch. 1. 16. he beheld *one like unto the Son of man, out of whose mouth went a sharp two-edged Sword*. Which Descriptions afford great Light to that passage of St. Paul to the Hebrews, ch. iv. ver. 12. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the joints and mar-*



row, and is a discerner of the Thoughts and Intentions SERM. XVI.  
of the Heart. And this exactly answers the De-  
scription our Saviour gives of Himself: Rev. ii.

23. *I am he which searcheth the Reins and Hearts.*

Further, concerning the Nature of this Divine Person, the Word or Son of God, the Scripture adds; that he is *the only begotten of the Father*, and was in *Glory with him before the World was*; that he is the *Brightness of his Father's Glory*, and the *express Image of his Person*, and *upholding all things by the Word of his Power*; Heb. i. 3. That he is *the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every Creature*, Col. i. 15. or, as he himself styles himself, Rev. iii. 14. *the beginning of the Creation of God*; that is, who was before and above all things, being the first Principle and Head over all; Himself, deriving immediately from the Father only; (and, as to the manner of That, *Who shall declare his generation?*) Whereas all other things, all Creatures, were produced *mediately* by his Operation. For so St. John affirms expressly; *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*: St. John i. 2. And St. Paul, still more distinctly: Col. i. 16. *By him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist*. If it be here demanded, how these two manners of expression are to be reconciled, that  
God

SERMON. God only is the Creator of all things, and yet all  
 XVI. things are said expressly to be created by Jesus  
 Christ; St. Paul gives a clear and direct Answer:  
*Heb. i. 2. By his Son God made the Worlds; and*  
*again, Ephes. iii. 9. Who created all things by Jesus*  
*Christ.* To interpret these passages, as some have  
 attempted to do, of a secondary and figurative Cre-  
 ation, the new Creation or Renovation of things by  
 the Gospel; is wresting Texts by a forced and unna-  
 tural Sense to serve an Opinion, when in their plain  
 and literal Meaning there is no real Difficulty.  
 For to conceive that God *created* all things at first  
 by his Son, is no more contrary to Reason, than  
 his *renewing* or *redeeming* all things by his Son,  
 which is acknowledged by all. And if *it pleased*  
*the Father, by Christ to reconcile all things unto*  
*himself, whether they be things in Earth, or things*  
*in Heaven;* as St. Paul expressly affirms, and all  
 men understand him to affirm it in the literal  
 Sense; there is no more reason to doubt, but in  
 the literal Sense likewise, it pleased the Father by  
 Christ to *create* all things for himself: which is as  
 expressly affirmed by the same Apostle. And  
 even in the Old Testament itself, those passages  
 which are spoken of Wisdom, *Prov. viii. 22, are*  
 by all antient Christian Writers understood of  
 God's creating the World by Christ: *The Lord*  
*possessed me in the beginning of his Way, before his*  
*Works of old; I was set up from everlasting, from*  
*the beginning, or ever the Earth was; When there*  
*were no Depths, I was brought forth; when there*  
*were*

were no Fountains abounding with Water; Before S E R M.  
the Mountains were settled, before the Hills was I XVI.  
brought forth; While as yet he had not made the  
Earth, nor the Fields, nor the highest part of the  
dust of the World; When he prepared the Heavens,  
I was there; When he set a compass upon the Face  
of the deep; When he established the clouds above;  
When he strengthened the fountains of the deep;  
When he gave to the Sea his Decree that the Waters  
should not pass his Commandment; When he appointed  
the Foundations of the Earth; Then was I by  
him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily  
his delight. If it be here further inquired, how  
those Divine Attributes and Powers, which are  
ascribed in Scripture to the Person of the Son, are  
consistent with the Unity of God, which is the  
Foundation of all Religion both natural and re-  
vealed; the Answer is obvious; that the Divi-  
nity ascribed to the Son, is not another, a co-  
ordinate Divinity; but the Power, the Majesty,  
the Glory of the Father, communicated and de-  
rived to the Son. Could it be affirmed that there  
were two or more self-originate, unbegotten, un-  
derived Principles; this would indeed destroy the  
Unity of God, and fundamentally subvert the  
very first Ground of Religion: But since the Glory  
of the Son is not originally his own Glory, but  
the Glory of the Father manifested in him, and  
derived to him, in a manner which neither we  
nor Angels perhaps can presume to understand;



S E R M. it is manifest still, that the *Monarchy* of the Universe, is hereby preserved entire.

XVI

CONCERNING the *Nature* of the *Holy Spirit of God*, the Scripture speaks very little in a Metaphysical manner; nor gives any encouragement to the inquisitiveness and vain Curiosity of human Speculation. Declaring only, that he is a Divine Person, proceeding or being sent forth from the *Father*: and in other places called the Spirit of the *Son*, and said to be sent forth from *Him*. Into the manner of his Derivation therefore, we ought not to presume to enquire; but be content with what the Scripture reveals to us, of his being in a singular manner, in a manner which we cannot presume to understand or explain, *the Spirit of God*. Only, because there have been some in these later Ages, who have denied the Being of this Holy Spirit, and have imagined it to be nothing but a mere Power or Attribute of God; it deserves to be taken notice of, that those Scriptures, which speak of him as being *grieved* at wicked men; as making *intercession* for us, and *helping our* infirmities; as *dividing* spiritual Gifts *severally*, as he *peases*; as *speaking not of himself*, but what he *bears* or receives *from the Father*: these and numberless other Texts in the New Testament, do plainly declare Him to be not a mere Virtue or Power, but a real Person distinct from the Father and the Son, and sent forth from Both for the perpetual Government and Direction of the Church.

THIS

THIS is what the Scripture briefly declares to S E R M.  
us in a *speculative* manner, concerning the Na- XVI.  
*ture* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And  
Happy had it been for the Church of God, if  
learned Men in all Ages had been content with  
what the Scriptures so declare, and had never  
entred further into Scholastic Speculations, from  
whence have arisen Endless Disputes, incurable  
Scepticism, and infinite Uncharitableness.

2dly, THERE is in the 2d place that which  
is *Moral*, concerning the several *Offices* of the  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost with relation to  
Us. And here the Scripture teaches us, con-  
cerning the *Father*, that he, being absolutely  
supreme over all, *made* the World by the Mini-  
stration of his Son, and *governs* it by a perpetual  
Providence, without which not a Sparrow falls  
to the Ground, or a Hair of our Head perishes.  
That having Compassion upon sinful man, and  
resolving to afford them the Grace of Repentance, Rom. iii.  
he sent his Son to take our Nature upon him, and 25.  
therein to reveal his gracious Will; and deliver- 1 Johniv.  
ed him up to an ignominious Death, that he 9, 14.  
might make Expiation and Reconcilement for our  
Sins; and raised him from the Dead by his Acts v. 30.  
mighty Power; and exalted him to his own  
right Hand; and appointed him to be the Judge  
of Quick and Dead; and has made all things  
subject unto Him; and by him reconciles all  
things unto Himself, both which are in Heaven  
and which are in Earth: and has appointed a

SERMON. Kingdom of eternal Happiness to them that serve  
 XVI. and obey him; and will destroy the wicked with  
 an everlasting Destruction. This is the *Office* of  
 the *Father*. Concerning the *Office* of the *Son*,  
 the same Scriptures declare, that he, by the Ap-  
 pointment of the Father, is our Saviour, Medi-  
 ator, Intercessor, and Judge; that having been  
 in the Form of God, he emptied himself of that  
 Glory, and willingly took upon him the form of  
 a servant; and died, to make our Repentance  
 available; and now sits at the right hand of God,  
 to intercede for us; and governs the whole  
 Church, according to the Will of his Father;  
 and searches and tries the Hearts of men at pre-  
 sent, and will finally judge them according to  
 their Works. Lastly, concerning the *Office* of  
 the *Holy Spirit*, the Scripture teaches, that hav-  
 ing been the Inspirer of the Prophets of old, tes-  
 tifying before-hand the Sufferings of Christ, and  
 the Glory that should follow; he was afterwards  
 sent forth in a more extraordinary manner, to be  
 the Comforter and Director of the Apostles; to  
 lead them into all Truth; to bring to their  
 remembrance all things which our Lord had said  
 unto them; to support them against the Power  
 of the World; to instruct them what to answer  
 to their Persecutors; to be the great Witness of  
 our Saviour's Resurrection, by working Signs  
 and Wonders and mighty Works, by inspiring  
 the Apostles with the Gift of Tongues, and di-  
 viding to their followers diversities of Gifts, to  
 every

2 Pet. i.

21.

1 Pet. i.

11.

John xiv.

1 Cor. ii.

10.

1 Cor. xii.

11.



every man severally, as might best serve the S E R M.  
 great end of their ministry : finally, to continue XVI.  
 with all good Christians even unto the End of the   
 World, as the great Sanctifier of the Hearts of  
 men ; assisting them with his grace, admonish-  
 ing them with his Holy influences, working  
 with them and inspiring them with his good Gifts,  
 and helping the Infirmary of their Prayers with  
 his own Intercession. This is what the Scripture  
 teaches us *distinctly and separately*, concerning the  
 several Offices of the Father, the Son, and the  
 Holy Spirit. They are also in some few places  
 all mentioned *together* ; as in the Form of Bap-  
 tism, whereby we are dedicated to the Service of  
 God, baptized into the Death of his Son, and  
 given up to the guidance of his Holy Spirit : In  
 the form of Blessing, wherein we are recommend-  
 ed by the Apostle to the Love of God, to the  
 Favour of Christ, and to the Communion or  
 Fellowship of the Holy Ghost : By St. Paul Eph. ii.  
 again : *Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6 ; There is one Spirit, —* 18.  
*one Lord — one God and Father of all, who is a-* 1 Cor. viii.  
*bove all, and through all, and in you all :* And in 6.  
 the Words of the Text ; *There are Diversities of* 1 Tim. ii.  
*Gifts, but the same Spirit ; and there are Diversi-* 5.  
*ties of Administrations, but the same Lord ; and*  
*there are Diversities of Operations, but it is the same*  
*God, that worketh all in all.*

It remains in the 3d and last place, that we  
 consider that which is *Practical*, concerning the  
 Honour due to the Person of the Father, and con-

SERMON concerning that which is due to the Son and to the  
XVI. Holy Ghost. To the Person of the *Father*, is

to be directed that absolute and supreme Worship, by which he is acknowledged to be alone

Heb. xiii. Παντοκράτωρ, the Maker and Judge of all; by  
23. whose incomprehensible Power, the World was

Acts v. 32. created; by whose unerring Providence, the U-  
xv. 8. niverse is governed; by whose supreme Authori-

1 Thes. iv. 8. ty, our Lord was sent forth to redeem Us; by

Heb. ii. 4. whose good pleasure the Holy Spirit is *given*, to

2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5. sanctify us; to whose glory, every tongue *now*

Phil. ii. 11. confesses that Jesus is the Lord; and to whom,

1 Cor. xv. 24; xi. 3. *at the Consummation of all things*, our Lord him-

self shall deliver up the Kingdom, and become

subject to *Him* that put all things under him,

that God may be all in all; To *Him* we are to

pray for the Remission of our Sins; and that our

Repentance may be accepted, through the power-

ful Intercession of Christ our great High Priest;

and that our Hearts may be renewed by the In-

spiration of his Holy Spirit: and to *Him* we are

to give Continual Thanks, for his *original* and

undeserved Goodness in sending his Son at first

to be the Saviour of the World, and to be unto

us a propitiation through Faith in his Blood; and

for the *continuation* of that Goodness, in af-

fording us the perpetual assistance of the Holy

Ghost.

To the Person of the *Son*, there is due this

peculiar Honour; that we offer up all our Pray-

ers in his Name; (*whatsoever*, says he, *ye shall*

*ask*

*ask of the Father in my Name, he will give it you,* SERM.  
 John xv. 16.) that we rely upon his Merits, de- XVI:  
 pend upon his Intercession, obey him as our  
 Lord, love him as our Saviour, fear him as our  
 Judge. That we acknowledge his great Con-  
 descension, in loving us and giving himself for  
 us; in that, when he was *in the form of God, he*  
*was not greedy of retaining that form, but willing-*  
*ly made himself of no reputation, and took upon*  
*him the form of a Servant, and was made in the*  
*Likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a*  
*man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto*  
*Death, even the Death of the Cross,* Phil. ii. 6.  
 For which reason, as the Apostle adds in the  
 Words immediately following, *God also has high-*  
*ly exalted him, and given him a Name which is*  
*above every Name; that at the Name of Jesus every*  
*knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in*  
*Earth, and things under the Earth; and that every*  
*tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to*  
*the glory of God the Father.* And accordingly  
 upon this Account, we find the highest Honour  
 ascribed to him both by men and Angels: Rev.  
 v. 8. *The four and twenty elders fell down before*  
*the Lamb, — and sung a new song, saying, Thou*  
*art worthy; — For thou wast slain, and hast re-*  
*deemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every kindred,*  
*and tongue, and people, and nation; — And I heard*  
*the voice of many Angels, — saying, — Wor-*  
*thy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and*  
*riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory,*



SERM. and Blessing: And every Creature — heard I saying, Blessing and Honour and Glory and Power be unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. And ch. i. 5; Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and has made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever. This is the peculiar Addition of the Christian Religion; that whereas before, all men honoured the Father, they should now likewise Honour the Son: St. John v. 23. Which Honour paid to the Son of God, is therefore no diminution to the Honour of the Father, nor derogation from the Monarchy of the Universe; because the Greatness and Dignity, the Divinity and Majesty of the Son, is not contradistinct to, but derivative from, that of the Father; and consequently must be acknowledged to that very End, that it may be (as St. Paul expressly declares) to the glory of the Father.

Lastly, CONCERNING the Honour peculiarly due to the person of the Spirit, that which the Scripture declares, is; that we acknowledge him to be the divine Inspirer of the Prophets, both of the old and new Testament; and the immediate Worker of all those Signs and Wonders in proof of the Christian Dispensation, which are properly stiled the Witness and Testimony, the Power and Demonstration of the Spirit; that he is also the Sanctifier of all Hearts, and the immediate Distributer of all the Gifts of God, for the

the Edification of his Church; that therefore we receive and believe his Testimony, as delivered in the inspired Writings; obey his good Motions; be solicitous to obtain his gifts and graces; and infinitely careful not to grieve and quench and drive him from us, lest we be found to do despite unto the Spirit of grace; which is in Scripture represented as a more unpardonable fault, than offending against the Person even of our Saviour himself. But the Time allows me only to hint these things barely, and propose them to your Meditations; the enlarging upon which, would be to lay down the whole System of Divinity. God grant that every one of Us, may so give Honour to the Father of all things, through the Mediation and Intercession of his Son our Saviour, and by the Assistance and Operation of his Holy Spirit; that by the communion and fellowship of the same Holy Spirit; and through the Merits and Death of the Son of God making our Repentance available, we may be presented faultless before the Throne of the Father of inaccessible Majesty, in the great Day.

S E R M.

XVI.

Eph. v. 9.

Gal. v. 22.

v. 16.

1 John ii.

27.

Eph. iv.

30.

1 Thes. v.

19.

Heb. x.

29.

---

# S E R M O N XVII.

Of the Desire of Knowledge.

[*Preached on Trinity-Sunday.*]

---

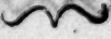
DEUT. xxix. 29.

*The Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children, for ever, that we may do all the words of this Law.*

S E R M.  
XVII.

**T**HE Book of Deuteronomy contains a brief Summary, or Recapitulation of the Law; To which are added by *Moses*, several earnest and most affectionate Exhortations to the people of *Israel*, to persuade them to the Obedience and Observation of that Law. He tells them that *he hath set before them Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, Good and Evil*; and he persuades them to chuse their Duty, and cleave to it as their Life, and to refuse the Evil and flee from it as from Death. He invites them to



to Obedience by the most affectionate promises S E R M.  
of the love, and favour, and protection of God ; XVII.  
and he deters them from Disobedience by the   
most severe threatnings of utter Destruction.  
He proposes to them the Law of God, as the  
proper subject of their constant Meditation ; ex-  
horting them to *bind it for a Sign upon their hand,*  
*and as frontlets between their eyes ; to write it upon*  
*the posts of their houses, and upon their gates ; to*  
*teach it diligently unto their children, and to talk of*  
*it when they sit in their houses, and when they*  
*walk by the way, and when they lie down, and*  
*when they rise up ;* Deut. vi. 7, 8. He tells  
them that *the commandments of God are the*  
*things revealed to them, to be studied by them and*  
*by their children for ever ;* that the knowledge of  
other things, is in comparison either unnecessary,  
or more difficult at least, and less needful to be  
attained ; and that therefore nothing could be  
more unreasonable, than to pursue the know-  
ledge of those things which were either wholly  
unnecessary, or at least far less needful to be  
known ; by neglecting the study and the know-  
ledge of that, in which alone consisted their Hap-  
piness and their Life. *The Secret things belong*  
*unto the Lord our God ; but those things which are*  
*revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever,*  
*that we may do all the words of this law.* The  
ultimate design and desire of Man, is Happiness ;  
and as the only way to this Happiness is Reli-  
gion, so the Knowledge of that Religion ought to  
be

SERMON. be at least our principal and first study. Religion  
 XVII. is the *doing all the Words of the Law, i. e.* the  
 obeying of the Commandments of God; the  
 Knowledge therefore of Religion, is the knowing  
 particularly what are the Commands of God, and  
 the knowing our obligation to obey those Com-  
 mandments. He that hath gained so much Know-  
 ledge, as to understand the Commandments of  
 God; and to convince himself of his *indispensa-  
 ble* Obligation to obey them; so as to live con-  
 stantly *in* the sense and under the power of that  
 Conviction; The *Words of This Law*, are the  
 Commandments of God; which he that has stu-  
 died so as to understand and practise them, is  
 sufficiently knowing, though he were ignorant  
 of all other things, because he knows his Hap-  
 piness which is his main Concern, and the way  
 to attain it. He that is ignorant of this, though  
 he had all other Knowledge that were possible to  
 be acquired either by Men or Angels, is yet mi-  
 serably and foolishly ignorant, because he is ig-  
 norant of that, which is indeed the only thing  
 that is necessary for him to know. A religious  
 man *may* lawfully divert his thoughts, and exer-  
 cise his industry, in other Speculations; but he  
 will not so far engage his curiosity, in the search  
 after *secret* things, as to neglect those which are  
*open and revealed*, those on which the true Know-  
 ledge or Worship of God does any way depend.  
 There are *some* Things, which are absolutely *be-  
 yond* the reach of our Faculties, and therefore

not possible to be thoroughly understood by us ; and S E R M.  
these a good man will not be ambitious to disco- XVII.  
ver, because he considers that God has placed  
them wholly out of the sphere of our capacity,  
and reserved the Knowledge of them as a Prero-  
gative to himself. There are *other* things, which  
if we can come at all to the Knowledge of, it  
must be by unwarrantable or unlawful means ;  
and these likewise a religious man will not be  
inquisitive to know, nor uneasy for want of  
that Knowledge ; because he considers that God  
has hidden them from us, by forbidding the use  
of the means to discover them. There are also  
some *other* things, which are neither impossible  
nor unlawful to be known, but the Search after  
them is difficult, and the Discovery unprofitable ;  
they neither promote the true Knowledge, Ho-  
nour, and Worship of God, nor the Benefit of  
Mankind ; and these, a pious man, will not be too  
much solicitous to find out ; because they would  
take up too much of that Time and those Medita-  
tions, which may be *more* usefully employed on the  
things that God has revealed. *Secret things be-*  
*long unto the Lord our God ; but the things that*  
*are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for*  
*ever.* From the words I shall observe these three  
things ; 1<sup>st</sup>, That there is naturally in Man, a  
very strong Desire of Knowledge ; 2<sup>dly</sup>, That  
this Desire, ought to be regulated and limited by  
the Condition of our Nature, and by the Word  
of God ; and 3<sup>dly</sup>, That not to regulate our De-  
fire



SERM. fire of Knowledge by these Rules, may be a very  
XVII. great occasion of Sin.

I. THERE is naturally in Man a very strong Desire after Knowledge. 'Tis the peculiar Attribute and Prerogative of God, to be infinitely perfect; and to be originally and unchangeably so. All *created* Beings, as far as we can judge of them, arrive at that Perfection which is the highest pitch and excellency of *Their* nature, by *degrees*; and they have always in themselves a natural and earnest Tendency towards that perfection. In things void of Reason and Knowledge, the perfection of *Their* Nature is nothing else, but a compleat Number, a due Proportion, and a regular Composition of parts; and *Their* natural tendency towards this perfection, is nothing but that Disposition which arises from the necessary qualities of Matter, and from the fixed laws of Motion. But in Creatures endued with Reason and Understanding, the Perfection of *their* Nature consisting principally in the Improvement of those more excellent Faculties; it is manifest *They* can aspire to what degree they please, and are apt to extend their Desires without limit. *I gave my Heart, saith Solomon, to seek and search out by Wisdom, concerning all things that are done under Heaven.* And the Scripture declares concerning him, *that he had Wisdom and Understanding exceeding much, and largeness of Heart even as the Sand that is on the Sea-shore; so that before him was none equal to him, neither af-*

ter him should there arise any like him. And yet S E R M.  
 even He, by departing from the study of the XVII  
 Law of God, and giving heed to strange Wo-  
 men, was a sad Example of falling from God in  
 his latter days. Wherefore, though there be na-  
 turally in men a very earnest Desire after Know-  
 ledge, yet I add,

2dly, II. THIS our Desire of Knowledge, ought  
 to be *regulated and limited*, by the *Condition* of our  
 Nature and by the *Word* of God.

1st, WE ought not to be ambitious of That  
 Knowledge, which the *condition and circumstances*  
 of our Nature make it impossible for us to obtain.  
 Knowledge is so amiable a perfection, that men  
 will not readily be persuaded, they can possibly  
 be too earnest in the pursuit of it, even though it  
 be in things which have no relation to the Ho-  
 nour of God, or to the Good of men. 'Tis true,  
 God hath given us Faculties, which we not only  
 may, but *ought* to improve; but then we must  
 always remember, that our Desires ought to ter-  
 minate in *such* possible and useful Perfections, as  
 are to be attained by the improvement of the Fa-  
 culties God has given us. Wisdom indeed is the  
 principal thing, says Solomon, *therefore get Wis-*  
*dom, and with all thy getting get Understanding;*  
 Prov. iv. 7; and ch. xviii. 15; *The Heart of the*  
*Prudent getting Knowledge, and the Ear of the*  
*Wise seeketh it.* But by Knowledge, He always  
 means *religious* Wisdom, and not that which  
 terminates only in *Pride and Vanity*; much less,  
 that

SERMON. that which by nature we are not made capable of  
 XVII. attaining. In which respect, a man's Desire after  
 Knowledge may become faulty, either when he  
 desires the Knowledge of such a *kind* of things,  
 as the nature of the things does not permit him at  
 all to understand; or when he desires such a *sort*  
 of Knowledge of any thing, as the nature of his  
 Faculties does not capacitate him to come up to.  
 There are some *kinds* of things, of so abstruse a  
 Nature, or at such a distance of Place or Time,  
 or which have so little connexion with That Know-  
 ledge of God and of ourselves, on which our  
 whole Duty depends; that they are altogether  
 beyond the reach of our Faculties; so that we  
 cannot possibly understand them at all: and in re-  
 spect of *these* things, 'tis evident we ought *so* to  
 limit our Desire of Knowledge by the *condition* and  
*circumstances* of our Nature, as not to attempt to  
 understand them at all; and not to pretend that  
 we *can* understand them, when indeed we *can*  
*not*. Of *other* things, which we can and ought  
 to know according to the measure of our Facul-  
 ties, there is yet such a *sort* or degree of Know-  
 ledge as we cannot arrive to; and we have no  
 more reason to murmur, that we cannot attain to  
 this *degree* of Knowledge, than we have to be dis-  
 pleased, that God has not made us equal to the  
 highest Orders of Angels; or than the Angels  
 have cause to be angry, that God has reserved  
 some Attributes incommunicable from himself,  
 and has not made *them* Masters of all Perfections.

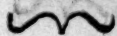
God



God hath communicated to every sort of Crea-<sup>S E R M.</sup> tures, such Perfections as himself pleased; and <sup>XVII.</sup> the condition of each of their Natures is the Law of God, by which they ought every one to limit and regulate their Desires. In matters of *Religion* indeed, in order to frame right Notions of God, and to serve him acceptably; we can never be too solicitous and careful in enquiring into the Truth: But *some* Secrets there are, the knowledge of which God hath reserved to himself; and the highest Angels cannot presume to look into them: And without question Angels have a clear Knowledge of many things, which human Abilities cannot without the utmost folly pretend to discover. Remarkable to this purpose is that Expostulation of God with *Job*; *Hast thou entred into the springs of the Sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the Depth? Have the gates of Death been opened unto thee; or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of Death? Where is the way where Light dwelleth? and as for Darkness, where is the place thereof? Knowest thou it because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?* ch. xxxviii. ver. 16. The Meaning is, *Not* that men may not commendably inquire into the Operations of Nature, which are the Works of God; so far as they have Faculties and Opportunities to do it; But that they ought to contain their Desire of Knowledge within the bounds of those Faculties, and not be proud and imperious, *intruding into things which*

VOL. IV. X they

SERM. *they have not seen, and vainly puffed up by a fleshly*  
XVII. *mind.*



2dly, As we ought not to be ambitious of what it is *impossible* for us to attain; so neither ought we to be solicitous after that, which it is unlawful for us to desire. And here, that which the Scripture determines in respect of our Desire after Knowledge, is this; 1st, That we ought not to endeavour to penetrate into things too deep for us, such as are the *hidden and secret counsels, or unrevealed decrees of God*. True notions of God, as discoverable by Reason, and the full Meaning of his whole revealed Will; These things we can never be too inquisitive after: But what cannot be known clearly by Reason or Revelation, concerns us not. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed, to us and to our children for ever. Vain men would be wise; Job xi. 12; intruding into those things which they have not seen, and desiring to impose them upon others. But can we by searching find out God? Can we find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know? Job xi. 7, 8: And Acts i. 7; It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.* 2dly, The Scripture further forbids the Desire of that Knowledge, the means of obtaining which are unlawful. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, appeared to our First parents *to be pleasant to the Eye, and*  
a Tree

a Tree to be desired to make one wise; Gen. iii. 6. SERM.

But since God had expressly forbidden them to XVII.

*taste of the Fruit of that Tree*, having reserved it as a single Instance of Homage and Acknowledgment to Himself, as being the Creator and Lord of Paradise; it is evident the Desire of that Knowledge, which they thought the eating of that Fruit would furnish them with, was at least the Occasion and the Cause of their Sin. In like manner, the same Desire of *such* Knowledge, as God has not afforded us the means of acquiring; has since in all Ages of the World, through the Deceit and Temptations of the Devil, put vain and superstitious persons upon such courses and means to attain it, as God has absolutely and expressly prohibited. 3dly, The Scripture forbids us *so* to search after the Knowledge of any thing else whatever, as in the too earnest pursuit of *that*, to neglect the study of the Law of God. Those divine Truths, which influence our practice, which furnish our minds with worthy Notions of God, and charitable Dispositions towards our Neighbours, and *make men wise unto Salvation*; are the things which God has proposed to us to converse with and meditate, to fix our thoughts and our studies upon. In *other* things, *There is a Wisdom*, saith the Wise man, *that multiplieth bitterness*; and *there is a Knowledge which bringeth nothing but weariness*. To study the Works of God and Nature *so*, as therein to admire and adore the Wisdom of their Almighty Creator; to study and search



SER M. out the great Truths of Religion in such a manner, as thereby to be persuaded to conform our practice *in earnest* to the Rules of the divine Law; *this* only is truly worthy of a man, and acceptable to God; *this* only is a study which will yield us *present* Satisfaction and *future* also; which will afford us the truest Contentment *now*, and the solideft and most substantial Joy *at the last*. David found such Satisfaction in this Contemplation of the Works and of the Law of God, that he declares he could entertain himself with the Meditation of God's Law all the day long, *and in the night season also he could think upon the same*, Psal. cxix. 55. and Solomon, who had given his Curiosity the most unbounded liberty, and had beyond comparifon the largeft extent of Knowledge that was ever attained by any mortal man; *whose Wisdom compassed the whole Universe, and his Understanding and largeness of Heart was exceeding great, even as the sand upon the sea-shore*; this great man (I say) when he came seriously to compare all things that he had observed, and to consider the last Issue of things, he concludes all his Meditations with this wise Reflection, *Ecclef. xii. 13. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole; the whole Duty, and the whole Happiness of Man.* It remains that I proceed now in the

III. Third place, to show how great a Sin it is, not to regulate our Desires of Knowledge, by the forementioned Rules. And 1st, To determine dog-

dogmatically in things not clearly revealed, and S E R M. to take delight in *imposing* upon each other such XVII. Determinations, is in effect directly opposing and striving against that Order and Constitution of things, which God has appointed; and endeavouring to make *ourselves* what God has *not* made us. Instead of being thankful for those Faculties and Capacities, which God has freely endued us with, it is ungratefully murmuring against him, because he has not given us every thing that our unreasonable Fancies may suggest to us to desire, but has left us great occasions for Modesty, for mutual Charity and Forbearance. We are made capable of knowing and imitating our great Creator, and of being made happy by that Knowledge and that Imitation; and is not this sufficient for us, unless we be admitted also to determine with peremptoriness, and to *impose* upon each other our own Opinions concerning those Secrets, which infinite Wisdom has not thought fit to reveal clearly to us? All other created Beings contain themselves willingly within the bounds of their Natures, and cheerfully move within the limits of the sphere that God has prescribed them; except sinful men, lovers of Power, and insolent towards each other; and excepting also those Apostate Spirits, *who kept not their first estate, but having revolted from God, are reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.* That a proud aspiring after something, not attainable by them, in those circumstances wherein God

SERMON. has created and placed them, was the cause of  
 XVII.  these Angels Fall, the Scripture frequently intimates to us; as in that Allusion of the Prophet *Isaiah*, *ch. xiv. ver. 12.* *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning? — For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the Congregation, in the sides of the North; I will ascend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the most High; yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell, to the sides of the pit.* Which though applied indeed in that place by the Prophet to the King of *Babylon*, yet the Allusion seems to be borrowed from some greater and higher Event. What it was in particular, that this Pride prompted those wicked Spirits to aspire to, the Scripture does not expressly acquaint us; But since we cannot conceive that they could aspire to the Power and Majesty of God, which it was impossible they could be so weak as to imagine it could be aimed at by any created Being; it is probable their Crime might be the aspiring proudly and imperiously to some degree or kind of Knowledge, which God had with-held from them. 2<sup>dly</sup>, The not regulating this Desire by the fore-mentioned rules, was the occasion of our First Parents Fall. This appears from the Description of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: *Gen. iii. 6.* *When the Woman saw that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the Eyes, and a Tree to*  
 be



*be desired to make one wise, or [knowing] she took of* SERM.  
*the Fruit and did eat.* It is also evident from the XVII.

description of the manner of the Temptation: 

*ver. 5. God doth know, saith the Tempter, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.*

The Temptation proposed, was the *Knowledge of Good and Evil*; and that which principally prevailed upon the Woman to eat of the Fruit of the Tree, was its appearing desirable to make one wise. *What* is here meant particularly by the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the Scripture does not directly explain to us. That it was not the Knowledge of any particular *sort* of Good and Evil, is evident; For since the Understanding of our First Parents, as all their other Faculties were much more perfect *before* than *after* the Fall, it is evident they could not but have a perfect Knowledge of all *natural* Good and Evil, and a right Understanding concerning the Nature of all *moral* Good and Evil; excepting only the *experimental* Knowledge of both these sorts of Evil, which it is impossible to suppose could be a Temptation. It remains therefore that the Knowledge of Good and Evil, with which our First Parents were tempted, was not the Knowledge of any particular *things*, but some particular *kind* or *manner* of knowing them: Possibly a Desire of *fore-knowing* things to come; or some other such *sort* of Knowledge, as in the present state and circumstances of their Nature they were not capable of

SERMON. attaining. 3dly and lastly, A Desire of Knowledge  
 XVII. not regulated and limited by the Rules before set  
 down, is very apt to put men upon unlawful  
 practices, to attain what they so desire. For that  
 which is not to be attained but by sinful and un-  
 warrantable practices, the *Desire* of it cannot but  
 be *also* sinful. What remains therefore, is by  
 way of inference to apply what hath been said;  
 and, by giving some particular instances, to re-  
 duce to practice what has been discoursed in ge-  
 neral, concerning our Desire of Knowledge and  
 the Limitations of it.

AND 1st, From what has been said, it follows,  
 that the vain Desire of knowing beforehand things  
 to come, is such a Desire of the Knowledge of  
 secret things, as is not permitted us by the pre-  
 sent circumstances and condition of our Nature,  
 or by the Word of God. It is the peculiar Attri-  
 bute of God, and not communicable to any fi-  
 nite Being, to foreknow all things that *shall* be,  
 before they come to pass; and therefore the Pro-  
 phet, when he would expose the vanity of wor-  
 shiping Idols or false Gods, challenges them to  
 foretel future Events; *Let them bring forth their  
 strong reasons, and shew us what shall happen; shew  
 the things that are to come hereafter, that we may  
 know that ye are Gods: Is. xli. 22, 23.* Yet be-  
 cause the Power of Beings superior to us, is great  
 and unknown; vain and superstitious men have  
 therefore in all Ages been too apt to be seduced  
 with the Imaginations of the possibility of such  
 Dis-

Discoveries. In the times of Heathen Darkneſs S E R M.  
 and Ignorance, the Devil by giving ſometimes XVII.  
 doubtful and ambiguous Answers, which to be  
 ſure ſhould be interpreted to the trueſt ſenſe, which  
 way ſoever the Event might happen to determine  
 it; and ſometimes by giving ſuch dark and ob-  
 ſcure Oracles, as, though no man could make  
 any ſenſe of them, yet they inſenſibly filled men's  
 minds with an awful reſpect and veneration for  
 the Author of them; by theſe means, I ſay, the  
 Devil enſlaved the *Gentile* World, and kept them  
 in a conſtant courſe of Idolatry. Or, if moſt of theſe  
 things were, as is probable enough, only the  
 Frauds of wicked and profane *men*, to impoſe up-  
 on the Ignorant; yet ſtill the Event was much the  
 ſame, in abuſing their Credulity and unjuſtifiable  
 Deſire of Knowledge, to confirm them in their  
 idolatrous Practices. The *Jews*, who by the Know-  
 ledge of the true God and the Diſcovery of his  
 Will made to them in the Law, were in a great  
 meaſure freed from the bondage of ſuch Superſti-  
 tions; yet whenever they fell away from God, and  
 began to neglect his Worſhip and diſtruſt his Pro-  
 vidence, one inſtance of their Diſobedience preſent-  
 ly was, having recourſe to unlawful ways of In-  
 quiry after Knowledge. Thus when the Lord would  
 not answer *Saul* becauſe of his Diſobedience, im-  
 mediately he betakes himſelf to a Method, which  
*Moses* tells the *Iſraelites* was one of thoſe Abomi-  
 nations, becauſe of which *the Lord thy God doth*  
*drive the Nations out from before thee; For theſe*  
*Na-*



S E R M. *Nations, which thou shalt possess, bearkened unto*  
 XVII. *Observers of Times, and unto Diviners, Deut. xviii.*

10. And among *Christians* it is observable, that those always who have least Knowledge of God, and least Trust in his Providence, and least Understanding in the true System and Powers of Nature, have the greatest Confidence in groundless Pretences and unwarrantable Methods of pursuing Knowledge. It matters not, that the Pretences to supernatural ways of knowing things, are commonly mere Cheat and Fraud; it is a degree of this Sin, if Encouragement be given to such false Pretences. And to pretend to know things by the *Stars*, which introduces Fatality and destroys Religion; is not much different from pretending to know them by Arts that have worse Names.

2dly, F R O M what hath been said it follows, that a Desire of prying into the hidden and unrevealed Decrees, Counsels, and Purposes of *God*, and desiring to impose upon others our Opinions concerning them; is also such a Desire of the Knowledge of secret things, as is not permitted us by the Law of our Nature, or by the Word of God. The measure of our Knowledge of divine things, is that Revelation which God has been pleased to make to us in his holy Scripture; This, we can never study with too much care and exactness; But whatever pretends to go beyond these bounds, is presumptuous and unwarrantable. Those things which God has revealed to us, we may know, because God has discover-

ed them to us; and we are bound with all diligence to search after the Knowledge of them, because they are proposed to us as the rule of our life, and the condition of our happiness. *More* than God has made known to us of this kind, we *cannot* discover; and to pretend to understand, and confidently impose upon each other what God has not thought fit clearly to reveal, is no less foolish and absurd, than it is unreasonable and sinful. *For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?* Rom. xi. 34. Only in general this *one* thing we may depend upon as certain, that no secret Counsel, or Purpose, or Decree of God can be contrary to his Will revealed in his Word. Upon what conditions God has appointed that men should be happy or miserable, he has clearly and fully revealed to us in his holy Scriptures; and more than this, it is neither necessary nor possible for us to know.

*3dly* and *lastly*, An over earnest Desire of knowing things subtle and unnecessary to be known, so as in the pursuit of the Knowledge of these things, to neglect the Study of that which more nearly concerns us; is also a sort of that search after Knowledge which is forbidden in the Scripture. Whatever hath no relation to the Honour and true Worship of *God*, and promotes not Righteousness and Charity among *Men*: Whatever tends not *so*, to inform our Judgments, as to rectify our Practice and reform our Lives, is useless and unprofitable. Let us then in the first place endeavour

SERM. your to attain that Knowledge which may make  
 XVII. us wise unto Salvation; and always so regulate  
 our Inquiries after other things, as not to neglect  
 the Study of that, which is our Interest and our  
 Life. I conclude with the words of the wise Son  
 of Sirach: Ecclus iii. 21. *Many are in high places  
 and of renown; but mysteries are revealed to the  
 meek. Seek not out the things that are too hard for  
 thee, nor search the things that are above thy strength:  
 But what is commanded thee, think thereon with re-  
 verence; for it is not needful for thee to see with  
 thine Eyes the things that are in secret.*



---



---

# S E R M O N XVIII.

Of the Testimony of our SAVIOUR'S  
Doctrines.

[*Preached on Trinity Sunday.*]

---

I JOHN V. 8.

*And there are Three that bear Witness in Earth, the  
Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; And these  
Three agree in One.*

**T**HE Words of the foregoing Verse, S E R M.  
which have no relation to the Argu- XVIII.  
ment the Apostle is here insisting upon,   
I shall not take into consideration at this time;  
for a Reason now well known to all who carefully  
study the Scriptures, and not needful to be men-  
tioned in this place. But confining my Discourse  
to the Words of the Text itself, I shall 1<sup>st</sup> en-  
deavour to explain distinctly, their *connexion* with  
the whole Thread of the Apostle's reasoning in  
this chapter; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, I shall consider the *Doc-*  
*trine particularly contained in the Words themselves.*

I. IN

SERM. I. IN the *first verse* of this chapter, St. *John XVIII.* lays down the *general Doctrine*, which is the Subject of this whole Epistle: *Whosoever* (says he) *believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* To be *born of God*, signifies, by an easy Figure of Speech, to be what the Scripture calls a *Child of God*, a *regenerate person*, one that *loves God and keeps his Commandments*; living in the habitual Practice of universal Virtue and Righteousness. And *such* a person is every one, who *believeth that Jesus is the Christ*: Not every one who *professes* to believe, but who *does* believe: Not every one who *pretends* to be, but who *really is*, a *sincere Christian*. The *reason why* the Apostle expresses sincere Christianity by this particular phrase of *believing that Jesus is the Christ*, is because there were even then some false Apostles, in whom the *mystery of iniquity did already work*: Who taught, that *Jesus* was not indeed the *Christ*: That *Christ*, the *Son of God*, was not indeed incarnate, was not *made Man*, and *suffered for us really*, but in *appearance only*: That *Jesus*, the person born of the blessed Virgin, was not *himself* the *Christ*, the *Son of God*; but that *Christ*, the *Son of God*, was *another person*, fictitiously and in *Name only* united to *Jesus who was the Son of Man*. Against these false Teachers, the Apostle argues through this whole Epistle; ch. ii. 22. *Who is a Liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?* From the Context it appears evidently, that he is not there arguing against professed Unbelievers, but against pre-  
tended

tended Christians, who denied the reality of our S E R M. Lord's Incarnation. Again, ch. iv. 1. *Beloved,* XVIII. *believe not every Spirit,* (that is, every Prophet or Teacher,) *but try the Spirits whether they are of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the World: Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh,* (that is to say, that the Son of God was really incarnate and made man for us,) *is of God: And every Spirit that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh; is not of God.* Again, 2 Epist. v. 7. *Many deceivers are entred into the World, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh.* And in the 4<sup>th</sup> ch. of this 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle, ver. 15. and ch. v. 1, 5. the Phrases, *to confess that Jesus is the Son of God,* *to believe that Jesus is the Christ,* and *to believe that Jesus is the Son of God,* are all used in the like Sense, to express the reality of the incarnation of the Son of God, and that he *truly and personally,* (not in *Appearance and Name* only,) became the *Son of Man.* Hence, through this whole Epistle, these and the like Expressions are constantly to be understood as signifying *true and sincere Christians.* And therefore, I say, the *general Doctrine,* laid down by St. John in the *first Verse* of this fifth Chapter, (and the Subject-matter indeed of the whole Epistle,) is this; that *every sincere Christian* is a *regenerate person,* one that *loves God and keeps his Commandments;* living in the habitual Practice of universal Virtue and Righteousness.



S E R M. ON the other side : Whosoever loves God, and  
 XVIII. desires to keep his Commandments, and is disposed  
 to become a regenerate person; will hardly fail of  
 being sincerely a *Christian*: For so the Apostle  
 goes on in the latter part of the first verse; *Every  
 one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that  
 is begotten of him*; Every one that sincerely loves  
 God, every one that is of a good and virtuous  
 Disposition, will naturally love the Religion of  
*Christ*. And, that no man might mistake, where-  
 in this Love of God consists; he defines it in ex-  
 press words, ver. 3. *This, says he, is the love of  
 God, that we keep his Commandments: and his Com-  
 mandments are not grievous. And the Reason why  
 his Commandments are not grievous is, because  
 (says he, ver. 4.) whatsoever is born of God, over-  
 cometh the World*; A true Child of God, a sincere  
 Christian, will despise and conquer all the Temptations  
 of a sinful and debauched World. And  
 the Means, by which he is enabled to conquer these  
 Temptations, is Faith; *This is the Victory that  
 overcometh the World, even our Faith*: Our Faith,  
 our firm Belief, of the Being and Government of  
 God, and of his having appointed a day wherein he  
 will judge the World in Righteousness; this is what  
 will not fail to prevail over the Temptations of a  
 wicked and debauched World. And because it  
 is by the Revelation of *Christ*, by the Doctrine  
 and preaching of the Gospel, that this Faith or  
 firm Belief of a future Judgment is principally  
 established in the minds of men; therefore in the

5th verse the Apostle proceeds to explain this SERM. XVIII.  
Faith in the following manner; *Who is he that*  
*overcometh the World, but he which believeth that*  
Jesus is the Son of God? that is, that he is the  
true Messiah which was to come into the World,  
the Person appointed to be the Judge of Quick  
and Dead.

THAT this is plainly the Meaning of the  
Phrase, appears from the parallel places wherein  
the Scripture expresses the same Sense in other  
Words. Thus, what in this 5th verse is, *believing*  
*that Jesus is the Son of God*; is in the 1st verse,  
*believing that Jesus is the Christ*. And St. Peter's  
confession, which in St. Matthew's words, ch. xvi.  
16. is, *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God*;  
is, in St. Mark's words, ch. viii. 29. *Thou art the*  
*Christ*. Again: The Question put to our Lord by  
the High-Priest, which in St. Matthew's words,  
ch. xxvi. 63. is, *Whether thou be the Christ the Son*  
*of God*; is, in St. Luke's words, ch. xxii. 67.  
*Art thou the Christ*? And Nathanael, in his con-  
fession, John i. 49. uses these two, as known sy-  
nonymous expressions; *Rabbi, thou art the Son*  
*of God, thou art the King of Israel*.

THE Faith therefore which St. John here tells  
us, *overcometh the World*; is the believing that  
Jesus is the true Messiah, the Person appointed of  
God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. Which  
Truth, whosoever is firmly persuaded of, will not  
easily suffer himself to be overcome by the Tempta-

S E R M. tations of *Sin*, which he knows will expose him to  
 XVIII. the final Wrath of God at that great Day.

WHEREFORE this *Faith*, this *Belief* that *Jesus is the Son of God*, that he is the Person by whom God will judge the World in Righteousness; This, I say, being a Matter of so great importance, a Doctrine on which the whole of Religion depends; the Apostle proceeds to tell us, *ver. 6.* that our Lord did not *barely affirm* this of himself, but came with powerful *Evidence and Proof*, with sufficient and undeniable *Witnesses* of so important a Truth: *This is he that came*, saith he, *by Water and Blood, even Jesus Christ.* He *came*; that is, he manifested himself to be the true Messiah, and made it appear that he was really sent of God. For thus the Messiah, is described, in the Question put by *John Baptist's* Disciples to our Saviour; *Matth. xi. 3.* *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* Before his appearing, his Title was, *He that should come*; And after it, the Apostle here styles him accordingly, *This is he that came.* He came, declaring himself to be sent from God, as his Son, the Christ, the Judge of the World; and proving the Truth of what he affirmed by the evidence of three concurring Testimonies, The *Water*, The *Blood*, and The *Spirit*: *This is he that came by Water and Blood, even Jesus Christ; not by Water only, but by Water and Blood; And it is the Spirit that beareth Witness, because the Spirit is Truth.*



THE Words, *not by Water only, but by Water and Blood*; seem to be an *Allusion* to what the same Apostle St. *John* records in his *Gospel*, that, when our Lord's side was pierced, *forthwith there came out Blood and Water*: But it seems to be an *Allusion only*; the words in this place having a different Sense; and referring no otherwise to those in the *Gospel*, than as the Blood and Water there mentioned are recorded as an Evidence of the Reality and Certainty of our Lord's *Death*: Which *Death*, or voluntary *laying down of his Life*, the same Apostle here in his *Epistle*, allleges as *One Testimony* of the Truth of our Lord's Doctrine, styling it *the Blood*.

By *three concurring Testimonies* therefore, distinctly recited in the *sixth verse*, did our Lord prove himself to be the true Messiah. And because they are the *three great and most undeniable* Evidences, that gave Testimony to our Lord and to the Truth of his Doctrine; therefore the Apostle repeats them again, (as it were by way of recapitulation of the Sum of his Argument,) in the words of the Text, ver. 8. *There are three that bear Witness, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these three agree in One*: They are one concurring or agreeing Testimony. And if we receive the *Witness of Men*, says he, ver. 9. (that is, if *two* Witnesses were in the Law sufficient Evidence of any matter of Fact among Men;) *The Witness of God is greater*; this *threefold* Testimony which God

SER. M. has given to the Truth of the Doctrine of Christ, XVIII. is still more certain and undeniable.



THE *End and Design*, for which this Doctrine of the Gospel was preached by Christ, and thus attested of God; is set forth, ver. 11. *And this is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son:* Which words are of the same import with those of our Saviour himself in the Gospel of St. John; *This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

THE *Application* of the whole follows, ver. 18. *We know, saith the Apostle, that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not. And why doth such a one not sin? Even because the Son of God is come, ver. 20. and hath given us an Understanding that we may know him that is true; that is, he hath taught us how the true God will be acceptably served and obeyed: And we are accordingly in him that is true, (we do accordingly so obey and serve the true God,) in his Son, that is, by or through his Son Jesus Christ: This, says he, is the true God, and eternal Life.*

II. AND now, having explained distinctly the Connexion of the Text, with the whole Thread of the Apostle's reasoning in this chapter; I proceed in the *second* place to consider the *Doctrine contained particularly in the words themselves*: There are *three that bear Witness, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.* The Order in which they are ranked in the *sixth* verse, is the true Order of Nature;

ture; the *Water*, the *Blood*, and the *Spirit*; And S E R M.  
in that Order I shall discourse upon them. XVIII.

*First* therefore, The *first* of the three great Testimonies here recorded by St. *John*, as given to the Truth of our Saviour's Mission and Doctrine; is that which he styles *the Water*. His Meaning is; *That Testimony*, which God gave to our Lord in so very remarkable and illustrious a manner at the Time of his *Baptism*, Matth. iii. 16. *And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the Water; and lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending — upon him: and lo, a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.* St. *John*, in his *Gospel*, answerable to the Stress here laid upon it in his *Epistle*, enlarges very particularly upon *this Testimony*; alledging the Account given of it by *John the Baptist* in the following manner; ch. i. 31. *I knew him not; But that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with Water: And John bare Record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven, — and it abode upon him: And I knew him not; But he that sent me to baptize with Water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost; And I saw and bare Record, that this is the Son of God.* Again; ch. iii. 26. The same Testimony is referred to by the *Jews*, discoursing with *John the Baptist*, and saying; *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan,*



S E R M. to whom thou barest Witness. And again, by our  
 XVIII. Saviour himself; ch. v. 33, 37. *Ye sent unto John, and he bare Witness unto the Truth: But I receive not Testimony from Man; — the Father himself, which has sent me, hath born Witness of me.* This therefore was the first great Evidence of the Truth of our Lord's Mission; the Testimony given him at his ascending out of the *Water*, when the Spirit descended visibly upon him, and there came a Voice from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Secondly; THE next that bears Witness, is what the Apostle here styles *the Blood*: That is; our Lord's *laying down his Life* for a Testimony to the Truth of his Doctrine, joined with the *Circumstances preceding and attending his Death*. He did not only *preach* that he was the Son of God, and by his holy and exemplary *Life* justified his Integrity in what he said: But he *died* also, to make good his Doctrine; and, in his Death, was attended with many the strongest circumstantial Evidences of Truth. To his *Disciples*, he frequently declared before-hand, that he should be crucified and slain, and should rise again the third day. To the *Jews*, he prophesied long before his suffering, *John viii. 28. When ye have lift up the Son of Man, then ye shall know that I am He; and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father has taught me, I speak these things.* To *Pilate*, he professed, *John xviii. 37. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the World, that I should*

should bear Witness unto the Truth. This is what S E R M.  
 St. Paul calls, his *Witnessing before Pontius Pilate* XVIII.  
*a good confession*, 1 Tim. vi. 13. And his steadfast-  
 ness in it, caused even *Pilate himself* to testify,  
 that the putting him to death, would be a shed-  
 ding the *Blood of a just Person*; Matth. xxvii. 24.  
 The *particular circumstances* of his Death, were all  
 of them the fulfilling of so many distinct Prophe-  
 cies; in which it had been predicted, that he  
 should be *sold for thirty pieces of Silver*, that he Zech. ix.  
 should be *scourged, buffeted and spit upon*; that he 9.  
 should have *gall and vinegar* offered him to drink; If. i. 6.  
 that they who saw him crucified, should *mock at* Pf. lix. 21.  
 his *trusting in God*; that the Soldiers should *cast* Pf. xxii. 8.  
*lots for his garments*; that not a *Bone of him* should — 18.  
*be broken*; and that *they should look on him whom* Pf. xxxiv.  
*they had pierced*. Concerning all which Circum- 20.  
 stances, and particularly this last, of the Soldiers Zech. xii.  
*piercing him with a Spear*, and his being really 10.  
 dead without having any Bone broken; St. John  
 thus declares, ch. xix. 35. *He that saw it, bare*  
*Record; and his Record is true*. Upon other Signs  
 following his Death, the *Centurion that watched*  
*him*, bore Witness, saying, *Truly this was the Son*  
*of God*, Matth. xxvii. 54. *After his Resurrection*,  
 (which was itself the great Evidence of all;) his  
*Disciples* sealed likewise the same Testimony with  
*their Blood*: Which is therefore styled, Rev. xvii.  
 6. *the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus*; That is, of  
 those who were beheaded, ch. xx. 4. *for the Wit-*  
*ness of Jesus, and for the Word of God*; Or, as it

SERMON. is ch. vi. 9. *who were slain for the Word of God, XVIII. and for the Testimony which they held.* To which may be added, that even his *Enemies* also, who wished that his *Blood* might be on them and on their children; even their *Blood* also was made a Witness to the same Truth, by the Vengeance that came upon them at the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

Thirdly, THE third and last Evidence or Witness to the Truth of our Lord's Doctrine, is the *Spirit*. And under this Head, are included many particulars.

1st, THE whole Body of Prophecies under the Old Testament: *To him give all the Prophets Witness;* Acts x. 43. and Rev. xix. 10. *The Testimony of Jesus, is the Spirit of Prophecy:* So we render the Words: But the true rendering is; *The Spirit of Prophecy, is [only] the Testimony, or the Witness, of Jesus.* For which reason it is expressly styled by St. Peter, *The Spirit of Christ which was in the Prophets,*

2dly, THE Purity and spiritual Nature of the Doctrine itself which he taught, and the Innocency and Holiness of his Life; by means of which, he, as a Lamb without blemish, offered himself, through the eternal Spirit, without Spot, unto God.

3dly, THE Miracles which he worked in his own life-time by the Spirit of God: *Matth. xii, 28. If I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you;* and *John v. 36. I have greater Witness than that of John; For the Works which my Father hath given me to finish,*

1 Pet. i.

19.

Heb. ix.

14.



the same Works that I do, bear Witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. SERM.  
XVIII.

4thly, His Resurrection from the Dead: Concerning which, St. Peter tells us, that he was quickened by the Spirit; and St. Paul, Rom. i. 4. that he was declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead.

Lastly, THE Gift of the Holy Ghost; which according to his Promise, he sent down upon the Apostles after his Ascension. The Promise was, John xv. 26. I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father; he shall testify of Me: And the Accomplishment is, Heb. ii. 4. God bore them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will. So that, with great Power gave the Apostles Witness of the Resurrection of the Lord, Acts iv. 33. Him, saith St. Peter, hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour; — and we are his Witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him, Acts v. 31.

THIS therefore is the third and last great Witness to the Truth of our Lord's Doctrine; It is the Spirit that beareth Witness, because the Spirit is Truth. It is this great Variety, this manifold Evidence, of the Works of the Spirit; which gives the most undeniable Attestation to the Truth of Christianity. This is what St. Paul calls, the De-

mon-

SERM. *monstration of the Spirit, and of Power, 1 Cor. ii.*

XVIII.

4. *For our Gospel, saith he, came not unto you in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, 1 Thess. i. 5. Through mighty Signs and Wonders, by the Power of the Spirit of God, Rom. xv. 19.*

THE Inferences I shall draw from what has been said, are:

1<sup>st</sup>, IF God has given us such abundant Evidence of the Truth of Christianity, as has been above shown; then from hence it appears, how inexcusable those are, who neglect to embrace it, when proposed to them in its true and original Simplicity. In the manner *some* have mixt it up with human inventions; with their own unintelligible Doctrines, and corrupt Practices; it is no wonder indeed, that it has become a stumbling-block and an Offence. But as it was taught by Christ and his Apostles, in the native Purity of the Word of God, *no* heart of Man, that is willing to act the part of a *rational* Creature, can possibly withstand its Evidence and Excellency. Only they who pretend to *embrace* it, and yet *disobey* it; are, of the two, still *more* inexcusable. If we *receive* the Witness of God, which he has given us concerning his Son; we must make Evidence of the Truth and Sincerity of our *Faith*, by the Testimony of a suitable *Practice*. We must verify and make good our *Baptism with Water*, by the *Purity and Holiness* of a virtuous and Christian Life. We must be content to be *ill-used* (if

at

at any time the Will of God be *so*,) and to *suffer* S E R M.  
XVIII.  
*many indignities*, for adhering to, and preferring  
 before human inventions, the Simplicity of that  
 Doctrine which our Lord and his Apostles attest-  
 ed with their *Blood*. We must take care to bring  
 forth the *Fruits of the Spirit*, in all Meekness,  
 Righteousness, Sobriety, and virtuous Behaviour;  
 Otherwise the *Works of the Spirit*, the several Ma-  
 nifestations of the divine Power, will be of no Be-  
 nefit to us.

2dly, If the Witnesses to the Truth of Christi-  
 anity recited in the Text, were a *sufficient* and *com-  
 plete* Evidence and Attestation of that Doctrine  
 which our Saviour himself taught; then from hence  
 we may learn what to think of those Evidences,  
 which corrupt Men in after-ages have alledged  
 in Proof of *their own additional Doctrines*. The  
 two principal Pretences of this kind, are that of  
 the *internal guidance of the Spirit*, and that of the  
*external Evidence of Miracles*. The former has  
 been occasionally claimed, by *Enthusiasts* of all  
 Sorts: The *latter*, is the great and standing Im-  
 posture of the *Church of Rome*. Concerning the  
*former*, it is sufficient to observe, that *other Foun-  
 dation can no man lay, than that which is laid, even  
 Jesus Christ*: And that therefore the following of  
 the *Guidance and Direction of the Spirit of God*, is  
 not following *vain and enthusiastic imaginations*,  
 but adhering to that Doctrine which God at first  
 revealed by the *Inspiration of his Spirit*, and is now  
 recorded in the *Holy Scriptures* written for our  
 Use.



SERM. Use. Concerning the latter, namely the *Miracles*  
 XVIII. pretended to be worked in these latter Ages in the  
 Church of Rome; That which the Scripture says  
 of them, is this: *Matth. xxiv. 24. There shall*  
*arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall*  
*show great Signs and Wonders; — Behold, I have*  
*told you before. 2 Theff. ii. 9. Whose coming is af-*  
*ter the working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs,*  
*and lying Wonders; and with all deceivableness of*  
*unrighteousness in them that perish, because they re-*  
*ceived not the Love of the Truth, (i. e. the purity*  
*and simplicity of the Gospel;) and for this Cause*  
*God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should*  
*believe a Lye.* And, to mention but one place  
 more, with which I shall conclude: *Rev. xiii. 13.*  
*He doth great Wonders, and — deceiveth them that*  
*dwell on the Earth, by the means of those Miracles*  
*which he had Power to do.* From which, and all  
 other Impostures and Deceits, &c.

# S E R M O N XIX.

Of our SAVIOUR'S Temptation.

[*A Sermon Preached in Lent.*]

MATTH. iv. i.

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.*

**T**HE History of our Saviour's Temptation, is a portion of Scripture, in which there are several *Difficulties*, that deserve particular Explication; and upon which may be made several useful *Observations*, to direct us in our own Practice.

1. IN the *first* place, it may be inquired, *why* our Saviour, whom the Scripture elsewhere declares to have been *tempted in all points like as we are, only without Sin*; is yet by the Evangelists recorded, as having been tempted *only at this particular Time*: Then was Jesus led up to be tempted. Then: That is, as soon as he had been baptized. So St. Mark explains it, ch. i. 11, 12. At his Bap-

S E R M. Baptism There came a Voice from Heaven, saying,  
 XIX. *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas-*

*ed: And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the Wilderness.* The Reason is, because he then began to enter upon his Office, of preaching the Doctrine of Salvation; *That Doctrine*, by which the Works and Kingdom of the Devil, the Power and Dominion of Sin over Mankind, was to be destroyed. Before this, we do not read of his being tempted; because his Life being private like that of other Men, his Temptations were so likewise, Sin only always excepted. Neither, after this, is there any mention of his being tempted any more; because the Tempter being at this Time thoroughly vanquished, did not hereafter hope to prevail so much by *tempting*, as by *opposing and persecuting* him. The proper Time of Tryal, was just after his Baptism, at the first entering into his Office. And as the Tempter might reasonably think *this* the likeliest Season, to assault him with Success; so the Wisdom of God knew, on the contrary, that it was the fittest Time for his repulsing and triumphing over the Tempter. For this reason the Text takes notice, that *Jesus was led up* of the Spirit, that is, not by the evil Spirit, but by the good Spirit of God, was he led up to his Temptation. So St. Luke expressly, ch. iv. 1. *Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the Wilderness.* And indeed it is observable, that our Saviour, who before his Incarnation



appeared to *Moses and the Patriarchs in the Form* SERM.  
*of God*, that is, invested with the immediate XIX.  
*Glory and Power of his Father*; on the contrary,   
*all the time of his residing here upon Earth*, appeared  
 [xix. 10.] *divested of that Glory, being made in*  
*the Likeness of Man*; and is accordingly represent-  
 ed through the whole Gospel, as acting and work-  
 ing under the Conduct of the *Holy Spirit*; and  
 having (as our Lord speaks concerning himself,  
*John iii. 34.*) *given the Spirit unto him, not by*  
*Measure.*

2. It may be enquired, *why* our Saviour con-  
 tinued so long in the solitary Retirement of a *De-*  
*sert place*, and why he *fasted* through all that  
 Space of Forty Days. As to his *Retirement in ge-*  
*neral*, and his *fasting or Humiliation* during that  
 Retirement; the Reason of it seems to have been,  
 that he might prepare himself beforehand by *Me-*  
*ditation and Prayer*, for the executing of that great  
 Office which he was about to undertake. Thus  
*Moses*, the Giver of the *Law*. Thus *Elijah*, the  
 Head of the antient *Prophets*. Thus *John Bap-*  
*tist*, the *Fore-runner* of our Lord, *before the day of*  
*his showing unto Israel*; Luke i. 80. Thus the  
*Apostles* of our Lord, at the time of their sending  
 for *Paul and Barnabas* to preach, *fasted and pray-*  
*ed*; Acts xiii. 3. And when they first *ordained*  
*Elders in every Church*, they *prayed with fasting*,  
 ch. xiv. 23. And our Saviour, admonishing his  
 Disciples concerning some extraordinary miracu-  
 lous Gifts, with which they were to be indued;

*This*

S E R M. *This kind, saith he, goeth not out, but by Prayer and*  
 XIX. *fasting; Matth. xvii. 21. In ordinary cases, it is*  
 to be understood by Us as a *Rule and Example*  
 in proportion, that in undertaking any *Office*,  
 and especially any *Sacred Function*, we be not  
 rash and precipitate, careless, and full of *worldly*  
*Thoughts and Designs*; but that, withdrawing  
 our *Minds* from the *World*, and attending seri-  
 ously to the promoting of *God's Glory*, or the  
*Interest of Truth and Virtue* among Men, we  
 beg the *Divine Assistance* to enable us, and by  
*Meditation and Study* strengthen our own *Reso-*  
*lutions* of being diligent, and improve our *Qua-*  
*lifications* towards being more successful in the  
*Performance* of our *Duty*.

As to the *particular Space of Time* wherein our  
 Saviour fasted, which was *forty days*; This was  
 an Accomplishment of those antient Types, when  
*Moses was with the Lord* in the Mount *forty days*  
*and forty nights*, and did neither eat bread, nor drink  
*water*; (Exod. xxxiv. 28.) and *Elijah*, (1 Kings  
 xix. 8.) *went in the strength of the meat that he had*  
*eaten, forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb the*  
*Mount of God.* *Moses's Fast*, was for the Sins of  
*Israel* in the Wilderness; Deut. ix. 18. *I fell down*  
*before the Lord forty days and forty nights, I did*  
*neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your*  
*Sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight*  
*of the Lord, to provoke him to Anger.* *Elijah's Fast*,  
 was for the Idolatry of *Israel* in the days of the  
 Kings; 1 Kings xix. 13. *There came a Voice to him,*  
*saying,*

saying, *What dost thou here, Elijah?* And he said, *SER M.*  
*I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; XIX.*  
*because the children of Israel have forsaken thy Co-*  
*venant, thrown down thine Altars, and slain thy*  
*Prophets with the Sword.* These Types therefore  
 of the Giver of the Law, and of the Chief of the  
 Prophets, our Saviour who came to fulfil the Law  
 and the Prophets, to fulfil all Legal, as well as Ma-  
 ral Righteousness, and to be an Expiation for the  
 Sins of the whole World; thought fit to accom-  
 plish. And possibly even in his own Fast also of  
 forty days, there might still be something typi-  
 cal, and prophetical. For, as it was told to Eze-  
 kiel in his Vision, ch. iv. 6. *Thou shalt bear the ini-*  
*quity of the house of Judah forty days, I have ap-*  
*pointed thee each day for a year:* And as the Pro-  
 phet Jonah prophesied of Nineveh, *Yet forty days*  
*and Nineveh shall be overthrown;* (which, though  
 in the literal sense it was deferred upon their Re-  
 pentance, yet in the accounts of prophetical com-  
 putation it was really fulfilled, as is intimated at  
 the conclusion of the book of Tobit :) So it is very  
 observable, that God suffered the Manners of the  
 Jews in the Wilderness (upon whose account Mo-  
 ses's Fast was kept; God bore with them, I say,  
 in the Wilderness) forty years, in the time of that  
 great Provocation; Acts xiii. 18. and Ps. xcv. 8,  
 9, 10. And from the time of our Saviour's Death  
 to the final destruction of Jerusalem, the same im-  
 penitent Nation had again the same Space allow-  
 ed them of forty years.



SERM. THE Use of such Observations as these, is, to  
 XIX. show the exact *Connexion* there is between the several prophetical *Types* made use of in Scripture, and the *Events* to which those *Types* have relation. The comparing of which, one with another, is a confirmation of the Truth of the inspired Writings, and consequently of the Truth of the Revelation itself.

THE Churches in *following* Ages, long after the Apostles times, instituted the Forty-days Fast of *Lent*, for some sort of a Resemblance or Imitation of our Saviour's Fast: But this, being not of Apostolical Institution, is to be looked upon only as all other Appointments of merely human Authority.

3. IT may be inquired, *why* our Saviour, who had Power over unclean Spirits, and could cast out Devils at his Pleasure; was yet pleased to submit himself and condescend so far, as to be tempted at all by the Enemy. To this Question, the Apostle gives an Answer, *Heb. ii. 14.* that our Lord being through Death to destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; — took therefore upon him, not the Nature of Angels, wherein he could not have died; but the Nature of Men. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted; he is able to succour them that are tempted.

ed. And ch. iv. 15. *We have not an High Priest* SERM.  
*which cannot be touched with the feeling of our In-* XIX.  
*firmities; But one who was in all points tempted*  
*like as we are, yet without Sin.* Tempted, not  
 only by the great Adversary, as in the present Hi-  
 story, whereof my Text is a part; but tempted  
 also by all the usual Difficulties of human Life. For  
 so he expresses himself to his Disciples, *Luke xxii.*  
*28. Ye are they which have continued with me in my*  
*Temptations.* And indeed the Design of his com-  
 ing into the World, was not barely to die; but in  
 the whole course of his Life also, to set an Ex-  
 ample of Humility and of perfect Obedience, as  
 well as to give himself a Propitiation for our Sins  
 by his Death. For this Reason he was circumcised,  
 and became obedient in all things to the Law of  
 Moses. And when he came to John's Baptism;  
 though he had no Sin to wash away by Repent-  
 ance; and John, knowing him, would have for-  
 bidden him, saying, *I have need to be baptized of*  
*thee, and comest thou to me?* *Matth. iii. 14.* yet  
 Jesus insisted upon it, saying, *Suffer it to be so*  
*now; For thus it becometh us to fulfil all Righteous-*  
*ness.* All Righteousness; that is, every thing which  
 is, not only properly and strictly needful in itself;  
 but every thing that is meet, every thing that is  
 decent, every thing that is regular, exemplary, or  
 of good report.

4. It may be inquired, (and this is one of the  
 greatest Difficulties of all,) *why* the Tempter would  
 at all assault our Lord, or what Advantage he

SER M. could possibly hope to gain over him. Was it  
 XIX. possible that he could think to defeat the Counsel  
 of God, or disappoint the Design of his sending  
 the Messiah into the World? To this, it may be  
 replied, 1<sup>st</sup>, That as wicked *men* perpetually at-  
 tempt *vain, unreasonable, and absurd* things; so  
 wicked *Spirits* likewise, deserted of God, and for-  
 saken of all Goodness and true Understanding,  
 may well be supposed to attempt things no less  
*unreasonable and absurd*. That evil Spirits should  
 at any time have *hoped* to prevail against the Al-  
 mighty by *Power, and Force*, as some have sup-  
 posed; is indeed too absurd to be imagined. But  
 that they should rebel against the *Counsel and Will*  
 of God, and endeavour maliciously to overthrow  
*his Kingdom of Righteousness*; this is no more than  
 what wicked *men*, in a lower degree, are perpe-  
 tually doing. But 2<sup>dly</sup>, It may be considered fur-  
 ther, that possibly the Tempter was not yet *sure*,  
 whether our Lord was indeed the *Messiah* or no.  
 His words, *If thou be the Son of God*, seem to ex-  
 press his *uncertainty* concerning that matter. And  
 there are several other things taken notice of in  
 Scripture, the observing of which will make this  
 seem less improbable. The Evangelists tell us,  
 that the Devil *entered into Judas*, and put it in his  
 Heart to betray his Master. By this it appears,  
 that the Tempter did not even then know, that  
 the Salvation of Men was to be accomplished by  
 the shedding of the Blood of Christ; seeing he  
 hoped to put an End to the Doctrine of Christ, by  
 de-



destroying his Life. And this will be the less to S E R M.  
 be wondred at, if we consider what is declared in XIX.  
 Scripture even concerning good *Angels themselves*,  
 who *always behold the Face of our Father which is*  
*in Heaven*, 1 Pet. i. 11. The antient Prophets,  
 says the Apostle, *Searched what, and what man-*  
*ner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them*  
*did signify, when it testified before-hand the Suffer-*  
*ings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow. Unto*  
*whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but*  
*unto Us they did minister the things which are now re-*  
*ported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel*  
*unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Hea-*  
*ven. Which things, the Angels desire to look into.*  
 Not only evil *Spirits* understood not, what the  
 Prophets had foretold concerning the Sufferings  
 of Christ, and the Glory that should follow; but  
 even good *Angels* themselves, St. Peter tells us,  
 were *desirous to look into* those things. And St.  
 Paul carries this matter still further: Eph. iii. 9.  
*To preach, saith he, the unsearchable Riches of*  
*Christ; and to make all men see what is the Fellow-*  
*ship of the Mystery, which from the Beginning of the*  
*World, hath been hid in God, who created all things*  
*by Jesus Christ; To the intent, that now unto the*  
*Principalities and Powers in heavenly places, might*  
*be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.*  
*By the Church; that is, by the Dispensations of God's*  
*Providence towards his universal Church, by the*  
*Events accomplishing antient Types and Mysteries;*  
*and by the clear fulfilling of obscure Prophecies;*  
 by

S E R M. by these is the Wisdom of God, and the manifold  
 XIX. Beauty of the Divine Counsels, made known not  
 to Men only, but to Angels also. And this per-  
 haps is the true meaning of that obscure Text :

\* *This is the old and true Reading.* 1 Tim. iii. 16. The *Mystery* \* of *Godliness*, (or God) \* *manifest in the Flesh*, was seen of Angels : Seen, not in the *literal* Sense ; for that was no *Mystery* ; But *understood, apprehended, made plain*, to the Angels ; who were before, in that Sense, *desirous to look into it*. To mention but one place more : There is a very remarkable expression in the Book of *Tobit*, ch. vi. 17. where the Angel *Raphael*, one of the seven Spirits that are described as going in and out before the Throne of God, is introduced thus speaking : *Moreover, I suppose*, says he, (he does not speak as with *certain Knowledge*, but, *I suppose*, says he,) *that she shall bear thee Children*. He who considers these, and the like expressions of Scripture ; will not perhaps think *evil* Spirits to be Creatures of such extensive Capacity, but that the Tempter might very well be *uncertain*, whether our Saviour was the promised *Messiah* or no, at the Time of his presuming to tempt him as in the Text. But 3dly, Supposing the Tempter *did* know our Lord to be the promised *Messiah*, at the Time of his tempting him ; yet still it was by no means impossible for the great Deceiver to suppose, that as, by seducing the *First Adam*, he had excluded Mankind out of that Paradise which God had planted for them ; so by endeavouring to make *some* im-  
 pression

pression or other upon the *Second Adam*, he might prevent men from being restored to Paradise again; and so a *second time* defeat the *Counsel of God*. Defeat the *Counsel of God*; That is, not prevent any thing that the Almighty had *resolved absolutely* to accomplish: For, in that sense, nothing can *resist his Will*, nothing can *oppose his Power*: But the Enemy may oppose *such Counsels* or *Designs of God* for the Salvation of Mankind, as are *conditional* only, and appointed to depend upon the Behaviour of *others*: *Such Counsels of God*, as even *Men* are at liberty by their Perverseness and Obstinacy to disappoint. As when the Evangelist tells us, St. Luke i. 30. that the *Pharisees and Lawyers* rejected the *Counsel of God against themselves*: That is; *Against* their own Interest, *against* their own both Temporal and Eternal Welfare, they *rejected* the gracious Offers of the divine Mercy. *Such Counsels of God* as these, it is no wonder that he whose Works and Kingdom our Lord came to destroy, should endeavour to oppose. Nor is it at all impossible, that the Design of God in sending the *Messiah* into the World, might seem to the Tempter to be of the *same Nature*; to be *conditional* likewise. For as *all the Threatnings of God*, even those which in the manner of Expression are most *peremptory and absolute*, yet in reality must always be understood to be *conditional*, and to include a tacit *exception* upon the case of Repentance and Reformation; (as is evident in the instance of *Jonah's Prophecy* against

S E R M.  
XIX.



S E R M. gainst Nineveh; and as is declared in general by  
 XIX. the Prophet Jeremy, ch. xviii. 7. *At what instant I  
 shall speak concerning a Nation and concerning a  
 Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to de-  
 stroy it; If that Nation against whom I have pro-  
 nounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the  
 Evil that I thought to do unto them:)* As, I say,  
 all the Threatnings of God are thus undoubtedly  
 conditional, so likewise all the Promises of God to  
 Mankind, however peremptory and absolute they  
 may seem in the prophetic Expressions of Scrip-  
 ture, may yet possibly be supposed to be in rea-  
 lity conditional also. The Nation of the Jews at  
 this day, notwithstanding the most express and de-  
 terminate Predictions in the Old Testament, not  
 only concerning the coming of the Messiah, but  
 even concerning the precise Time and Manner of  
 his coming, in Terms the most positive and abso-  
 lute that can be; yet are universally of Opinion,  
 that for the Sins of that People, his coming has  
 been put off beyond the Time limited by the Pro-  
 phets above seventeen hundred years. Well there-  
 fore might the Tempter apprehend, by the same  
 manner of reasoning, even after the Messiah had  
 begun to appear in the Flesh, that notwithstanding  
 the plain Predictions concerning the Salva-  
 tion of Mankind by him, yet possibly even in  
 all those Promises there might be included such  
 tacit Conditions, as that either by tempting Christ  
 himself, or his Followers the Apostles, or by ex-  
 citing wicked men to oppose and withstand him  
 and

and his Doctrine, he might at least in *some measure* prevent the Effect of his coming, and hinder (at least *in great part*) the Salvation of Men.

Thus have I briefly endeavoured to give some Answer to that difficult Inquiry, *why* the Tempter would at all assault our Lord; what Advantage he could possibly hope to gain over him; and how, and in what degree, he could think it possible to defeat the Counsel of God, and to disappoint the Design of his sending the Messiah into the World.

5. *Fifthly and Lastly*; since we read no more in the Gospels, of Christ's being tempted after this; it may be enquired, in the last place, *how* and in *what Sense* it is said by St. Luke, at the Conclusion of this History of our Lord's Temptation, *ch. iv. 13.* that the Tempter *departed from him, only* for a Season. The words, *for a Season*, seem to imply, as if after some Interval he *returned to tempt him again*. Which, since we no where read that he attempted any more, in any *such* way of Temptation as is recorded in the Text; it is therefore probable that the Evangelist's Meaning was this; that the Tempter, having failed of Success in his *present* Method, departed from our Lord for a Time, intending *hereafter* to assault him after *another* manner. That is to say: Finding there was *no possibility* of making any impression upon him by *Fraud*, he resolved for the future to *withstand* his Doctrine by *Opposition and Force*: And because there was *no room* for his Suggestions to take any place,

S E R M.  
XIX.



place, upon *Christ himself*; the only remaining way, was to stir up against him the hatred of profane *Men*; and try, by making *others* his Instruments, to put a stop by *their* Malice to that Doctrine, which *he himself* by his *own* Temptations could not prevent from being preached. *After a Season*, therefore, according to the Intimation St. *Luke* gives us, he returned again: And having prevailed upon *Judas* to betray him, and upon the *Pharisees* to encourage the Baseness of the Betrayer, and upon *Pilate* to put him to Death upon their false Accusation; he might very well think, that by the Success of this *last* Attempt, he had made sufficient Amends\* for his Failure in the *first*. By which Means, not only wicked *Men*,  
 Acts ii. 23. by whose hands our Lord was *crucified and slain*; but even the *great Deceiver himself*, became an Instrument, in the hand of Providence, to bring about, according to the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, the Salvation of the World.  
 Rom. xi. 33. O the depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out! The particulars of this last and great Transaction, are thus recorded in the Gospel: Our Saviour, in his last Discourse with his Disciples, a little before his Passion, gives them Notice of their great Temptation approaching; *John* xiv. 30. *The Prince of this World*, saith he, *cometh, and hath nothing in me*. The first Effect of this his coming, is expressed

*John*



*John xiii. 2. The Devil having now put it into the* S E R M.  
*Heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him:* XIX.

*And Luke xxii. 3. Then entred Satan into Judas,*  
*surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.*

This Success of the Tempter, was upon Judas only: But Attempts were made upon the rest of the Disciples likewise: *Luke xxii. 31. The Lord said, Simon, Simon; behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not: And unto all the Disciples, ver. 40. Pray, saith he, that ye enter not into Temptation; and again, ver. 46.*

*Rise, and pray, lest ye enter into Temptation.* Now at the same time that one of his Disciples was thus moved to betray him, and the rest afraid to acknowledge him, and tempted to deny him; the Malice and Cruelty of his Enemies, his Enemies both visible and invisible, wicked Men and wicked Spirits, was stirred up against him to such a degree, that he thus speaks concerning himself, *John xii. 27. Now is my Soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: And concerning his Enemies, Luke xxii. 53. This is your Hour, and the Power of Darknes.* The Effect was, that he was delivered into the hands of wicked Men, to be crucified and slain. And when the Enemy of man's Salvation, and the Enemies of their own Salvation, thought they had thus entirely put an End to the Doctrine of Christ by his Death; the Wisdom of God, on the contrary, brought it to pass,

SERM. pass, (which was the Mystery hid from the  
 XIX. Foundation of the World,) that by *this very*  
 means, even through Death, he destroyed him that  
 Heb. ii. 14. *had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil:* According to that Prediction of his own, spoken just before his Passion, but not understood till after his Resurrection, *John xii. 31. Now is the Judgment of this World, now shall the Prince of this World be cast out:* And ch. xvi, 11. *Of Judgment, because the Prince of this World is judged.*

THE only Observation I shall add further upon this Head is, that whereas it is affirmed in this History, that Satan *entred into Judas*, and put it in his Heart to betray his Master; it is not to be understood, either in *Judas's*, or in any other wicked man's case, that the *Devil's tempting them* is any manner of Excuse or Extenuation of their Sin. For the Devil can but suggest, even as wicked men do one to another. And, *being tempted*, or having Evil suggested to them, is no Sin. Sin consists wholly in the *Consent of the Will*, approving and putting in practice the Evil suggested. Over which *Consent of the Will*, the Devil has no Power; but it is owing entirely to the *Wickedness of the man's own Heart*, chusing to do the Evil which it ought to have refused. And therefore the Question is put by St. Peter to Ananias, (Acts v. 3.) by way of aggravation and severe Reproof of his Crime; *why hath Satan filled thine Heart?* that is, what Excuse can you have,  
 for

for complying with so vile a Temptation of the **SERM.**  
Devil, which you ought to have rejected with all **XIX.**  
Abhorrence?

BUT concerning this, (which is a practical In-  
ference from the whole,) I shall have occasion to  
speak further, in the following Discourse.

OF OUR SAVIOUR'S TEMPTATION.

[A Sermon preached in Exet.]

By the Rev. Mr. John Wainwright, Minister of the Gospel in Exeter.

MATTHEW 26:1-13

Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.

IN discoursing upon the Account the Scripture  
gives us of our Saviour's Temptation, I pro-

pose to consider the several Distinctions  
which in that portion of the Gospel History,

may seem to want more particular Explication:

and, as to seduce him thence such Opéra-

tion as may be useful to direct us in our con-

duct.

I. In the first place, the Distinction, which in

the History of our Saviour's Temptation, seemed

most necessary to be explained, I have already

considered particularly in a foregoing Discourse.

It is now distinctly to be seen, why our Saviour

whom the Scripture elsewhere declares to have

been without sin in all respects, only with

one sin, was tempted.



# S E R M O N XX.

Of our SAVIOUR's Temptation.

[*A Sermon preached in Lent.*]

MATTH. iv. i.

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.*

SERM.  
XX.

**I**N discoursing upon the Account the Scripture gives us of our Saviour's Temptation, I proposed, 1<sup>st</sup>, to consider the several *Difficulties*, which, in that portion of the Gospel-History, may seem to want more particular Explication: and, 2<sup>dly</sup>, to deduce from thence such *Observations*, as may be useful to direct us in our own Practice.

I. IN the *First* place, the *Difficulties*, which, in the History of our Saviour's Temptation, seemed most necessary to be explained, I have already considered particularly in a foregoing Discourse; And have shown distinctly, 1<sup>st</sup>, *why* our Saviour, whom the Scripture elsewhere declares to have been *tempted in all points like as we are*, only with-

ent Sin; is yet by the Evangelists recorded, as S E R M. having been tempted *only at this particular Time*, XX.  
 2dly, *Why* our Saviour continued so long in the solitary Retirement of a *Desert place*, and why he fasted through all that Space of forty days. 3dly, *Why* our Lord, who had Power over unclean Spirits, and could cast out Devils at his Pleasure; was yet pleased to submit himself and condescend so far, as to be *tempted* by the Enemy. 4thly, *Why* the Tempter would at all assault our Lord, or what Advantage he could possibly hope to gain over him. 5thly and lastly, *How and in what Sense*, since we read no more in the Gospels, of Christ's being tempted after this; it is yet said by St. Luke, at the Conclusion of this History of our Lord's Temptation, that the Tempter departed from him, *only for a Season*.

THESE several Questions naturally arising in the mind of any one who carefully reads this portion of the Gospel-History; I have endeavoured to give particular and distinct Answers to them, in the foregoing Discourse. I am now in the

II. *Second* place, to deduce from this History of our Lord's Temptation, such *Inferences* or *Observations*, as may be useful to direct us in our *own Practice*. And

1st, We have from hence an Intimation given us, that the Devil is always ready to tempt Men to Sin. As the good *Spirit* of God, is always willing to assist those who sincerely desire to be religious; and the *Angels* are with cheerfulness  
 sent

S E R M. sent forth to minister, to those who shall be heirs

XX. of Salvation; so the Scripture every where repre-

sents the evil One, as delighting and watching to entice men into Sin: (1 Pet. v. 8.) *Be sober, be vigilant; because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* Again, Eph. vi. 11, 12. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood; but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places.* And ch. ii. 2. *According to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of Disobedience.* If it be here inquired, for what Reason wicked Spirits tempt men to Sin, and what End they can propose in so doing; the most probable Answer is, that they do it for the very same reasons, as wicked men tempt and seduce one another. Partly, as esteeming it a sort of *Apology* or *Excuse* for themselves, if they can draw others into the like Condemnation; and partly as being moved with *Envy*, that others should enjoy that Happiness which they themselves have lost; and *hating* those, whose manners and dispositions are contrary to their own. Concerning wicked Men, the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* Thus describes the Temper I am speaking of; ch. ii. 12. *Let us lie in wait for the righteous; because he is not for our Turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings; — He*



is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his Life is SER.M.  
not like other men's, his ways are of another Fashion. XX.

And concerning evil Spirits, ver. 24. *Through Envy of the Devil came Death into the World; and they that hold of his side, do find it.* Nevertheless; though the Scriptures do indeed thus teach us, that the Devil is always ready to tempt men to Sin, yet it is always carefully to be observed, that he can do nothing more but tempt us. He has no Power over our Persons, our our Wills. He can only set before us Baits and Allurements; but we cannot be hurt by them except we yield to them and chuse them. The Treachery and Corruptness of our own Hearts within, is much more dangerous, than all the Assaults of the Enemy from without.

Let no man say, when he is tempted, *I am tempted of God*, St. Jam. i. 13. that is; let no man plead as an Excuse for his Sin, that God permitted the Devil to tempt him into it. (For that this is the meaning of the Phrase, *tempted of God*; appears plainly from 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. compared with 1 Chron. xxi. 1. In one of which places, it is said, *the Lord moved David to number Israel and Judah*; and in the other, that *Satan provoked David to number Israel*.) Let no man, says the Apostle, plead as an Excuse for his Sin, that God permitted the evil One to tempt him into it. For God, as he cannot himself be tempted with evil, so neither tempteth be any man; neither doth he permit the Devil to tempt any one further, than by laying before him such Allurements, as it is in the person's

S E R M. Power, and it is his Duty, and it is the proper Trial  
 XX. *and Exercise of his Virtue, to resist. But every man*  
 is then, and then only, *tempted; then only, ef-*  
*fectally and sinfully, tempted; when he is drawn*  
*away of his own Lust, and enticed.* The Enemy  
 of men's Salvation can do nothing more, but only  
 entice the *covetous* with hopes of *Gain*, puff up the  
*ambitious* with Expectation of *Honour*, allure the  
*voluptuous* with Prospects of *Pleasure*. Where the  
 Mind is not under the Power of any of these cor-  
 rupt Affections, the Tempter finding *nothing in*  
*it, (as the Scripture-expression is, John xiv. 30.)*  
 his Temptations can take no hold, and his Power  
 is at an End. *Resist the Devil,* says the Apostle,  
*and he will flee from you.* Take heed only that  
 your own *Heart* be sincere, sincere in the Pursuit  
 of Truth and Virtue; and all the *fiery darts of the*  
*wicked One* will in course be quenched. If we do  
 not, by our own Perverseness, grieve and drive  
 from us *the good Spirit of God; greater is he that*  
*is in us, than he that is in the World.* God, saith  
 the Son of *Sirach,* *has set before man Life and*  
*Death; and whether him liketh, shall be given him.*  
 The good Spirit is equally willing, and more able  
 to help us, than the evil One can be to hurt us.  
 In vain therefore do wicked men hope to extenu-  
 ate their own Crimes; by alledging that they  
 were tempted by the Devil. For the Scripture  
 never mentions it as an *Excuse*, but on the con-  
 trary as an *Aggravation* of a Fault, when it is of  
 such a nature as may well be supposed to have been  
 sug-

Ecclef.  
 xv. 17.

suggested by the *evil One*, and for *that reason* SERM. ought above all things to have been carefully avoided. **XX.** Why *has Satan filled thine Heart?* said St. Peter to Ananias, Acts v. 3. by way of more severe Reproof, for his presumption in attempting to deceive the Holy Spirit, wherewith God had inspired the Apostles. Nor indeed is it at all impossible, but that men's wicked deeds may sometimes rightly be ascribed to the Devil, even when perhaps they proceed *only* from the corruption of their *own* Hearts, and not from any immediate suggestion of *evil Spirits*. For, as it is agreeable to the Style of Scripture, and to the Reason of things, to ascribe every thing that is *good* to God; because *he* is the original *Author* of the *Powers* by which all good is done; and whatever good is done, is in obedience to his *Commands*, and agreeable to his *Nature and Will*: So every *wicked* thing that is done, may in a proportionate sense be ascribed to the *Devil*; because he is the *Head*, and the *Beginner* and *Encourager* of Evil; and whatever Evil is done, is in *Imitation* of him, and agreeable to him.

2dly, THE 2d Observation I would draw from the History of our Lord's Temptation, is, that we are hereby taught, that no Person whatsoever is so *great* or *good*, as to be exempt from Temptation. If the *Captain of our Salvation* was himself *made perfect by suffering*, let no man think himself so good, as not to deserve Chastisement at the hand of God. If *Christ himself was in all*



S E R M. points tempted like as we are, let no man think

XX.

himself so perfect, as to be above the Danger and the Fear of Temptation. We have great reason, as the Apostle admonishes, *Heb. ii. 1. To give earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.* For the Deceitfulness of Sin is great, and the Tempter is always watchful to seduce us, and the Heart of man is apt to grow negligent. So that even the best Christians are by St. Paul admonished to *work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall; *1 Cor. x. 12.* and *Rom. xi. 20. Thou standest by Faith; be not high-minded, but fear.*

3dly, FROM the consideration of the Time of our Saviour's being tempted, which was immediately after his Baptism; we are instructed, that when men first set about the Practice of Religion, they are then reasonably to expect the greatest Difficulties in their Duty. *Ecclus. ii. 1. My Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation.* The Life of a Christian, is in Scripture compared to a State of Warfare; wherein he that goeth out to Battle ought well to consider, before his setting out, what is the Strength of the Enemy that cometh against him. Whoever will lead a religious life; must begin with expecting, to find difficulty in subduing his own vitious Passions, and to find opposition from the course of a corrupt and debauched World. No man, saith St. Paul, should be moved by these Afflictions; for,  
your-

1 Thess.  
ii. 3.

*yourselfes know that we are appointed therunto:* SERM. 2  
*Ye, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall* XX.  
*suffer Persecution.* For this reason, the Scripture   
 frequently uses the Phrase of *overcoming*, to ex-12. <sup>2 Tim. iii.</sup>

press a Christian's Perseverance in the Love of Truth and Virtue. He must be *tempted with Allurements*, and *terrified with Dangers*; and then, if he *overcometh*, saith our Saviour, he *shall inherit all things*. The sooner a man begins the Practice of true Religion, the *fewer* evil Habits and the *less strong* vicious Inclinations will he have to struggle with from *within*. And when he has once got above the *Allurements of inward Temptation*, he will with much greater Advantage be able to withstand the *Force of Persecution from abroad*. When our Saviour had entirely repulsed the first Assaults of sensual Pleasure and Ambition; *the Tempter*, says the Text, *departed from him, and Angels came and ministered unto him*. Thus, whosoever in the Practice of Religion, steddily resists the *first* Temptations to Vice, and suffers not himself to be corrupted with any evil Habits; shall, after that, more easily *keep himself, and that wicked One toucheth him not*. *Wisdom*, that is, *Virtue*, is *glorious*, saith the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. vi. 12. *and never fadeth away* — *Who so seeketh her early, shall have no great Trouble, for he shall find her sitting at his Doors*.

4thly, FROM the following Expression in the Text, that *Jesus being led by the Spirit*, or being *full of the Holy Ghost*, went up into the Wilder-  
 Mat. iv. 1.  
 Luke iv. 1.

SERMON. nefs to be tempted of the Devil; we may learn,  
 XX. that *Temptation to Sin*, is not at all an *Argument*  
 of God's Displeasure, but only a Trial of us appointed by his wise Providence. It is, in the Nature of things, a necessary and essential condition of a *Probation-state*, that there should be some Trial of men's Virtue. And, in this sense, the Scripture scruples not to affirm, that God himself tempts men. Gen. xxii. 1. *After these things God did tempt, that is, did try, Abraham.* And, Deut. viii. 2. *God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his Commandments or no; and suffered false Prophets, ch. xiii. 3. that he might know whether you love the Lord your God with all your Heart, and with all your Soul.* The meaning is; not, that in these cases God does not know before, how men will behave themselves; but that they who have in them a true Root of Virtue, may actually bring forth the Fruit of it; may be exercised, may be approved, may be made manifest, to the World here, and to men and Angels hereafter; and may be, in themselves, improved, established, and fitted for the State of Heaven. The Trial of our Faith, saith the Apostle, worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope. For this reason, we are exhorted, not to faint, nor to be cast down under Temptations; nor to think it strange concerning the fiery Trials that are to try us. Nay, on the contrary, we are  
 1 Pet. i. 5. encouraged even to rejoice under manifold temptations;



tions; to call the man blessed, that endureth temptation, Jam. i. 12. to glory in tribulations, Rom. v. 3. to count it all joy, when we fall into divers temptations, Jam. i. 2. Considering, that when we are tried, we shall receive the Crown of Life, ver. 12. and that the Trial of our Faith, is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, 1 Pet. i. 7. For, when he has tried us, (as holy Job expresses it,) we shall come forth as gold; ch. xxiii. 10. And the Author of the Book of Wisdom, ch. iii. 5. God, saith he, proved the Souls of the righteous, and found them worthy for himself; As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering: And in the time of their Visitation (that is, at the day of Judgment) they shall shine, and run to and fro like Sparks among the Stubble; They shall judge the Nations, and have Dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever.

NEVERTHELESS, it is here carefully to be observed, that all the things which the Scripture speaks in this manner concerning Temptations and our rejoicing under them, are to be understood only of Temptations either already past and overcome; or else of such, as we have very good ground of assurance, that, by the Grace of God, they shall be overcome. For otherwise, as to Temptations in general, Temptations unexperienced, and of which we know the Danger but not the Success; concerning these, the Direction the Scripture gives us, is, on the contrary, that we may lawfully, nay, that it is our Duty to pray against them, and

SERM. endeavour to avoid them. Our Saviour, who  
 XX. *knew what was in Man*, thus exhorts his Disciples,  
 Mark xiv. 48. *Watch and pray, lest ye enter into  
 Temptation: and himself prays, not for his own  
 Sake, but as an Example to us: Father, if it be  
 possible, let this Cup pass from me. Our Nature is  
 frail, our Passions strong, our Wills biassed; and  
 our security, generally speaking, consists much  
 more certainly in escaping great Temptations, than  
 in conquering them. For this reason, our Lord  
 directed his Followers, when they were Persecut-  
 ed in one City, to flee unto another. Which they  
 who refused to do, led themselves into Tempta-  
 tion, and tempted God: Putting themselves upon  
 an Expectation of an extraordinary Assistance,  
 where God had not given any Promise of afford-  
 ing it. For where God calls us to a Trial, he  
 will enable us to go thro' it; but there is no  
 Assurance of such Assistance to the presumptuous.  
 It is not lawful, therefore, for Men to go of them-  
 selves, and throw themselves into Temptation;  
 and we are taught to pray, moreover, that God  
 also, in his good Providence, would not lead us  
 into it. This Phrase, of God's leading men into  
 Temptation, it is evident, must be understood ac-  
 cording to the Analogy of Scripture-language;  
 which, because nothing can come to pass with-  
 out God's Permission, does therefore usually, in  
 acknowledgment of the Supreme superintendency  
 of divine Providence over all Events, ascribe  
 every thing figuratively to God. As when God is  
 said*

said to have *delivered* a man, who is slain by *Satan* chance, into the hand of his Neighbour; to have *XX* moved David, by means of Satan's Temptations, to number *Israel* and *Judah*; to have *hardened Pharaoh's Heart*; to have *blinded the Eyes*, and made *fat*, or *stupid*, the heart of the people; to have *sent forth* a lying Spirit among *Abab's* Prophets; to have *hardened the Spirit of Sibon King of Heshbon*, and made his Heart *obstinate*; to have *hardened the Nations*, to come against *Israel* to battle, that *he might destroy them utterly*; to have put it in the Hearts of evil Princes, to give their Kingdom unto the Beast or false Prophet; to send upon men a *strong Delusion*; and, in the phrase we are now speaking of, to lead men into *Temptation*. It is plain, in all these Expressions, the intention is not to affirm, (except perhaps in some judicial cases,) that God, *actually* and *efficiently*, does these things; but only, that in the course of his all-wise Providence, he justly *permits* them to come to pass. Wherefore, when our Saviour teaches us to pray, that God would not lead us into *Temptation*; the meaning is, that he would be pleased so to order and direct things by his all-wise Providence in this Probation-state, as not to suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but that he would *with the Temptation also make a way to escape*, that we may be able to bear it. And particularly, that he would not *judicially*, and in anger, give us up and leave us to the Power of Temptation, and to the Seducements of the evil One;



**SEAM.** Ques; as he did Pharaoh and Abab, and Judas, and the Israelites in the Wilderness, when (as the Psalmist expresses it) *he gave them up unto their own Hearts Lusts, and let them follow their own Imaginations.* But that, on the contrary, he would either, by his preventing Mercy, keep us from the hour of Temptation, Rev. iii. 10. or, by his gracious Support, deliver us out of it, 2 Pet. ii. 9.

5thly, FROM what St. Luke records, at the Conclusion of this History of our Lord's Temptation, that the Tempter departed from him *only for a Season*; we may observe, that though at the first Entrance into the course of a religious life, the greatest Difficulties and Temptations are generally to be expected; and when once those are clearly overcome, the ways of Virtue usually become *Pleasantness*, and her Paths *Peace*; yet men ought never to look upon themselves as *secure* from the Returns of Temptation; but that the evil One may again assault them under different Forms and Shapes, to seduce them into different kinds of Sins; grounding Temptations, perhaps, even upon their *Security itself*. Wherefore, *we ought*, says the Apostle, *to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip*, Heb. ii. 1. For, many wise and good Resolutions, made with great Sincerity and right Intention, have through Negligence after some time, and want of serious recollection, failed of their Effect. *Watch ye, therefore, and be ready always; for ye know not what*

hour

hour your Lord doth come: Blessed (says our Sa-  
viour) is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he  
cometh, shall find so doing, Matth. xxiv. 46. SERM.  
XX.

Lastly, FROM the Particulars of our Saviour's  
Temptation, we may observe the several principal  
Ways by which the Tempter assaults men, and  
what are the most proper Means of resisting each  
Temptation.

His first Temptation was founded upon bodily  
and temporal Wants: When he was an hungred,  
the Tempter said; *If thou be the Son of God, com-  
mand that these Stones be made bread.* His mean-  
ing was; *If you are the Beloved of God, do not sub-  
mit to undergo any Hardships; but insist with God,  
that he shew his Love to you, by supporting you  
even miraculously.* Want, is the great Tempta-  
tion to murmuring against God: And therefore  
Satan is represented, Job i. 11. as thus pleading  
with God against Job; *Put forth thine hand now,  
and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee  
to thy face.* And the Prayer of Agur is for this  
reason given us as an example; Prov. xxx. 8.  
*Give me not poverty, — lest I take the Name of my  
God in vain.* The proper Preservative against  
this Temptation, our Saviour teaches us in his  
Reply; *Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by  
every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.*  
We must at all times depend upon the Protec-  
tion of Providence; and consider, that as in the  
time of Plenty, we are supported not by the things  
themselves which we enjoy, but by the Blessing of  
God

SERMON. God which alone enables them to support us; so, **XX.** in the Time of *Want*, the same Providence, if he thinks fit, and sees that it will promote our eternal Interest, can still always find proper Means of preserving us.

THE Second Temptation offered to our Lord, was; *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down;* down from a pinnacle of the Temple; *For it is written, He shall give his Angels Charge concerning thee, — lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a Stone.* To this Temptation, our Lord replies, that there being a Commandment given in the Law, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;* 'tis therefore *not lawful* for any man to throw himself needlessly into danger, merely to try whether Providence will therein protect him or no. We may rely upon God, that he will give his Angels charge over us, in all Dangers into which his Providence leads us; but no man ought to tempt God, by running wilfully any presumptuous hazards.

THE Use therefore of this part of the History of our Lord's Temptation, may be to warn us against two or three very dangerous Seducements of this kind. One is, a presumptuous confidence or vain security, relying upon groundless Notions of *Predestination*, and of God's particular Favour to us; or founded upon a False Application of conditional Promises, as if they were absolute: *Cast thy self down, for, it is written, he shall give his Angels Charge concerning thee.*



ANOTHER dangerous Temptation which we are here likewise warned of; a Temptation, contrary at first Sight to that now-mentioned, and yet in reality leading into the same Snare; is *Distrust of God*. Such a Distrust, as the *Israelites* in the *Wilderness* were guilty of, when they said; *He smote the stony rock indeed, that the Waters — flowed withal; but can he give Bread also, or provide Flesh for his People?* Ps. lxxviii. 21. He hath preserved thee indeed in other Dangers; but *Cast thyself down from hence*, and, if he has a *Favour* to thee, will he preserve thee then? When God has given men sufficient evidence of any Truth, to be still dissatisfied, and continually requiring other Signs, is *tempting of God*. Thus the *Jews in the Wilderness*, tho' they saw God's works with their own eyes, yet continued to tempt him ten times; Numb. xiv. 22. Thus the Pharisees, after the *Voice from Heaven* at our Saviour's Baptism, and after many other miraculous works, yet still desired of him a *Sign from Heaven*, Matth. xvi. 1. Thus, after the Proof given to St. Peter, of God's receiving the *Gentiles* into the Gospel-covenant; he calls it *tempting of God*, Acts xv. 10. to endeavour to put upon the necks of the *Disciples* the yoke of the Ceremonial Law. Thus, after the Proofs God has given of his existence, by the works of Nature; and of his Will, by the Revelation of the Gospel; to call for more proofs, is a *tempting of God*.

**SEEM.** THE third and last Temptation offered to our Lord, was worldly Power, Glory, and Interest: *All these Kingdoms will I give thee, and the Glory of them, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* The greatest of all Temptations, is Riches, Honour, and Power. These are the great Incentives to Luxury, Pride, and Tyranny. The Prosperity of Fools destroys them, Prov. i. 32. And, Man being in Honour, saith the Psalmist, *has no Understanding;* that is, is very apt to forget himself, and his Duty. *They that will be rich, fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown men in Destruction and Perdition.* 1 Tim. vi. 9. Insomuch that our Saviour declares, *Matth. xix. 23. That a rich Man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Hardly;* that is, not that Riches themselves are any Fault, but because of the numerous Temptations they accidentally lead men into, in a vicious and corrupt World.

Pf. xlix.  
20.

THE Answer our Lord makes the Tempter upon this last Trial; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;* teaches us, that we must prefer before all things, the Service of God, and the Practice of true Religion; being always ready to reject whatever shall come in competition with our Duty; even the whole World, if offered to us at the purchase of Sin. If we be found of this disposition; Lovers of Truth, and Doers of Righteousness; the Tempter will

will depart from us, as he did from our Lord; **S E R M.**  
 and Angels will come, and minister unto us; and **XX.**  
 the Spirit of God will preserve and guide us unto  
 eternal Life.

S E R M O N XXI.

The Shortness and Vanity of Hu-  
 man Life.

mon Life.

[Preached at Fenchurch Church, London, on the 14th of May, 1744.]

Job v. 6, 7.

Altho' the Shortness and Vanity of the  
 human Life is a Truth, which is  
 manifest to all, yet it is not  
 always felt as it should be.

**T** H E R E is no Book in the Old Testa-  
 ment that has so great and light  
 Acknowledgments of the Glory and  
 Power of God; nobler and more lively de-  
 scriptions of the Works of Creation and Providence;  
 more moving and affectionate declarations of the  
 Vanity of human Life, and the  
 Transience of all worldly Enjoyments; the  
 more frequent and more explicit expressions of all the  
 moral obligations of Religion; in their highest  
 Improvement, in their most refined and exalted  
 Sense.

S E R M.  
 XXI.

S E R



368  
SERMON XXI.

The Shortness and Vanity of Human Life.

[Preached in Lent.]

JOB V. 6, 7.

*Although Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust,  
neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground;  
yet Man is born unto Trouble as the Sparks fly upwards.*

SERM.  
XXI.

**T**HERE is no Book in the Old Testament that has in it greater and fuller Acknowledgments of the Glory and Power of God; nobler and more lively descriptions of the Works of Creation and Providence; more moving and affectionate declarations of the Shortness and Vanity of human Life, and the Transitoriness of all worldly Enjoyments; frequenter and more explicit Expressions of all the moral obligations of Religion, in their highest Improvement, in their most refined and exalted Sense;

Sense; clearer and plainer Significations of the S E R M.  
 Hope of the best and wisest men, in antient Ages, XXI.  
 concerning a Resurrection to a future Life; and  
 of their trust and reliance upon God, even after  
 he had given them over unto Death; than are to  
 be met with in this eloquent Book of Job.

BUT that which is *more particularly* the Design  
 and Subject of the whole Book, is to represent to  
 us the Character and Example of a Man perfect  
 in his generation, and of unspotted Integrity, a  
 Man that feared God and eschewed evil; whose  
 Strength God was pleased to try with one of the  
 greatest Calamities that is ever recorded to have  
 fallen on any of the Sons of Men: Under which,  
 his behaviour was such, that in all that severe  
 Trial, *He sinned not, nor charged God foolishly*;  
 nor suffered his Integrity to depart from him till  
 he died: But he perpetually appealed from the  
 false Opinion of *men*, to the unerring Judgment  
 of *God*; and vindicated, in the whole course of  
 his Affliction, the Sovereignty and Dominion of  
 God, his supreme Authority and Right over his  
 Creatures, to *try them* in what manner he thought  
 fit: Maintaining to the last, (*against* the Opinion  
 of all his Friends,) that even that great and un-  
 paralleled Affliction, which God was pleased to  
 lay upon him in so singular and unexampled a  
 manner, was by no Means an Evidence of his  
 being wicked and forsaken of God; but an Effect  
 of the divine Power and Providence which go-  
 verns the World, and brings about his own De-

SERM. signs, by wise, though oft-times (for the present)

XXI. secret and inscrutable Methods: And declaring  
 his Resolution to preserve his Confidence and Reliance upon God, even beyond the Grave itself; *Even though he slay me, saith he, yet will I trust in him: For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that my Eyes shall behold him; whom I shall see for myself, and not another.*

THE chapter, out of which the Words of my Text are taken, is part of the Reply of *Eliphaz* to that mournful Lamentation of *Job*, wherein he curses the day of his Birth, and wishes to have had his Affliction prevented by Death. In which Reply of his to *Job*, he erroneously supposes, that, because God frequently punishes the Wicked with severe Judgments in this World, therefore great Afflictions are a certain Evidence of men's having been very wicked: *ver. 3. I have seen the foolish taking root, but suddenly I cursed his Habitation; His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them; Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up the substance.* From which true Observation, he wrongfully intends to conclude, that, because *Job* was afflicted with the like Misfortunes, therefore he might justly be charged with having been guilty of the like Impieties; An Inference very derogatory to the Sovereignty and Wisdom of Providence, and very unjust to the character of the pious Sufferer. However, upon the whole, he adds  
 this



this just and true general Observation, the Consideration of which is of perpetual Usefulness, ver. 6. **S E R M. XXI.**

*Although Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto Trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

THE Words contain, 1st, A patheticall description of the Shortness and Vanity, the Sorrows and Calamities of human Life: *Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

2dly, A Declaration, that these Miseries of human Life, do not arise from Chance, or from Necessity, from blind Fate, or unaccountable Accidents; but from the wise Disposition of the Providence of God, governing the World: *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.* Wherein

3dly, It is implied, and intended to be inferred, that there are many just and good, wise and useful Ends, upon account of which, God permits so many Afflictions to fall upon Mankind; and the consideration therefore of which, (so far as we can discover them in this present dark and imperfect state,) ought to teach us Patience, and cheerful Resignation to the Divine Will.

1st, HERE is a patheticall description of the Shortness and Vanity, the Sorrows and Calamities of human Life: *Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upwards.* Afflictions and Calamities of innumerable kinds, seem, in the course of things, as necessarily and constantly to attend the Life of Man; as it is the nature of *light* things to

S E R M. ascend upwards, or of things *heavy* to descend.

XXI. And of this, Experience is so continual an Evidence, that there needs no Arguments of Reason to prove it, nor Ornaments of Expression to describe it. We are *born* into the World, weak and defenceless; we *grow up*, subject to numberless Casualties; and in the *whole course* of our Lives, are perpetually exposed to Dangers which cannot be foreseen, and to Troubles which are not possible to be prevented. The Weakness and Imperfections of *Childhood*, the Vanity and Follies of *Youth*, the Cares and Sollicitudes of *Manhood*, the Uneasiness and Infirmities of *Age*, follow each other in a close and speedy succession. And, in each of these States, we are continually obnoxious to Pains and Diseases of *Body*; and in most of them, to the acuter Torment of Anxiety and Vexations of *Mind*. All which Evils are increased, by the Accidents and Misfortunes of the World, by our own Negligences and Vices, by the Wickedness and Unreasonableness of other Men, by the Judgments of God upon ourselves, and by the consequences of the Judgments he inflicts for the Unrighteousness of others. All which several Calamities are emphatically described by pious Men, in different places of Scripture. With respect to our being liable to *Pains* and *Diseases*; Man is *chastened*, saith *Elibu* in the Book of *Job*, *with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain*, Job xxxiii. 19. and good *Hezekiah* complains; *Mine Age is departed, and is*

removed from me as a shepherd's tent; I have cut off  
like a weaver my life; he will cut me off with pining  
sickness; from day even to night wilt thou make an  
end of me: — like a crane or a swallow, so did I  
chatter; I did mourn as a dove, Isaiah xxxviii. 12.  
With respect to the vain Labours and Anxiety of  
Life; Surely every man, saith the Psalmist, walketh  
in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain;  
he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall ga-  
ther them, Psal. xxxix. 6. And Solomon, who had  
still greater experience of all the Labours of men  
under the Sun, thus expresses it: Eccl. ii. 23. For  
all his days are sorrows, and his travel grief; yea,  
his heart taketh not rest in the night: This also is  
vanity. With respect to the Oppressions and Trou-  
bles, that good men suffer from the Wickedness  
of others; I considered, saith the same wise Ob-  
server, Eccl. ix. 2. That all things come alike to all,  
that there is one event to the righteous and to the  
wicked, to the clean and to the unclean, to him that  
sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not, to the  
Good and to the Sinner, to him that sweareth and  
to him feareth an Oath: Moreover, I saw under  
the Sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was  
there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity  
was there; (iii. 16.) I beheld the tears of the op-  
pressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side  
of their oppressors there was power, but they had no  
comforter; (iv. 1.) But if there were none of those  
external and superinduced Calamities which men  
bring upon themselves and others, to augment

SERM.

XXI.



S E R M. the necessary and unavoidable Troubles which human Nature is *born to*; yet even by *these inherent* ones alone, would the Complaint in the Text sufficiently be verified; and *Eliphaz* might have justified his Observation, from the consideration only, of the mere *natural* Vanity, and Shortness of human Life: Which the Scriptures compares, to a *vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanishes away*, Jam. iv. 14. to a *tale that is told*, and then remembered no more, Ps. xc. 9. to a *wind that passeth away, and cometh not again*, Ps. lxxviii. 39. Admonishing us upon all occasions, that our days are *swifter than a weaver's shuttle*, and are *spent without hope*, Job vii. 6. that they are *swifter than a post*; they *flee away*, and see no good; they are *passed away as the swift ships*, as the *eagle that hasteeth to the prey*, (ix. 25, 26.) that *Man who is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble*; he *cometh forth like a flower*, and is *cut down*; he *fleeth also as a shadow*, and *continueth not*, (xiv. 1, 2.) that as for man, his days are as *grass*; as a *flower of the field*, so he *flourishes*; For the *wind passes over it*, and it is *gone*, and the place thereof shall know it no more; Ps. ciii. 15, 16. that our days on the earth are as a *shadow*, and there is *none abiding*, 1 Chr. xxix. 15. that all these things pass away like a *shadow*, and as a *post that hasteeth by*; And as a *ship that passeth over the waves of the water*, which, when it is gone by, the trace thereof cannot be found, neither the path-way of the keel in the waves; or as when a bird has flown

flown through the air, there is no token of her way  
to be found; — even so we in like manner, as soon as

SERM.  
XXI.

we were born, began to draw to our end, and have no  
sign of virtue to show, Wisd. v. 8. Upon all which  
accounts the Patriarch *Jacob*, when he was intro-  
duced to the King of *Egypt*, complains, notwith-  
standing he far exceeded the usual measure of  
men's present Age, and enjoyed much larger  
Possessions than the generality of mankind, that  
yet *few and evil had the days of the years of his  
pilgrimage been*, Gen. xlvii. 9. This Shortness and  
Vanity of human Life, is so obvious to every  
man's daily Experience and Observation, that it  
may seem in a manner needless to put men in  
mind of that, which it is not possible for them  
not to know. And yet so it comes to pass, that  
even the obviousness itself of the Observation, and  
the evident Certainty of it; is the cause that it  
has no more effect upon the generality of Men,  
than if it were very difficult to be observed at all;  
And for this very reason, because Men are already  
satisfied that they know it sufficiently, they never  
attend to it; but live as if they knew it not. It  
requires no reasoning, no arguing, no medita-  
tion, for men to discover to themselves that they  
must shortly die; and therefore, putting away  
the thoughts of it, as too trivial and obvious, they  
live as if it would never happen. But

2dly, TOGETHER with this pathetic description  
of the Shortness and Vanity, the Sorrows and  
Calamities of human Life, that *Man is born unto*

Power

B b 4

trouble,

SERM. trouble, as the sparks fly upward; the Text contains likewise a Declaration, that these Miseries and Troubles do not arise from *Chance* or from *Necessity*, from blind Fate or unaccountable Accidents; but from the wise Disposition of the Providence of God, governing the World; *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.* And this indeed is the only true and solid comfort, that can possibly be afforded to a rational and considerate mind; in order to support him both under the Troubles of *Life*, and against the Fears of *Death*. The only possible thing that can effectually enable a man, either to *bear patiently* the Afflictions and Troubles that will necessarily attend him here, or to be *willing and contented to depart from them*, with any hopes of entering into another and better State hereafter; is, to be able to consider that there is a God, a Powerful and Just, a Wise and good Being, that governs the World: By whose Wisdom and Goodness all things are designed, by whose Providence all things are conducted, to bring about the greatest and best Ends: by whose Power we were created, under whose Care and Government we are preserved and supported; in whose presence we walk perpetually, whose eyes are upon all our actions, and *in whom we live and move and have our Being*; without whom, not a *sparrow falls to the ground*, or so much as a *hair of our head* perishes; without whose direction no Evil can befall us, without whose Permission no

Power



Power can hurt us, and who is able finally to S E R M.  
 make *all things work together for good, to them* XXI.  
*that love and fear him.* This, and this only, if  
 men would take care to live *virtuously*; (For to a  
*vicious* man there is no Comfort, neither in this  
 life nor another,) if men would take care to live  
*virtuously*, I say, the Thought of God's governing  
 the World is *such* a Consideration, as is sufficient  
 to cause to vanish all the tragical Complaints of  
 the Miseries and Vanity of human Life. For,  
 though we could not conjecture at any Reason  
 why he has made us thus; though we were not  
 able to discern any kind and gracious Designs, in  
 the Afflictions that he lays upon us; though the  
 ways of Providence had been still more inextric-  
 cable than they are, and his Judgments far more  
 unsearchable than we now apprehend them to  
 be; yet certainly infinite Wisdom and infinite  
 Goodness, might well be trusted and relied up-  
 on, by any reasonable and considerate Mind.  
*That* Power, which in the frame and construc-  
 tion of the *natural* World, has adjusted all  
 things by Weight and Measure: *That* Power,  
 which with exquisite artifice has made every thing  
 in the exactest harmony and proportion, to con-  
 spire regularly and uniformly towards accom-  
 plishing the best and wisest Ends, in compleating  
 the beautiful Order and Fabrick of the *material*  
 Universe: *That* Power, might surely in his Go-  
 vernment of the *moral* World likewise, in his dis-  
 posing of intelligent and rational creatures, even  
 though

S E R M. though *we* could give *no account at all* of his ways,  
 XXI. yet with the justest reason be *believed* to direct all things for the best, and in order to bring about the noblest and most excellent Ends. How much more, when, even in this short and dark State, our finite and narrow Understanding *is* able to discern *many* wise and useful designs in the severest and most difficult dispensations of his Providence, (as in the sequel of this discourse shall be particularly shown;) how much more, I say, in *this case*, have we reason to submit, not only with Patience and Resignation, but even with Joy and Satisfaction, to his *good Pleasure* in all things; Firmly believing, that, as in the Frame of Nature, those things which by Atheistical Philosophers were anciently looked upon as Arguments of Error and Defect, of want either of Knowledge or Goodness in the Formation of the *material* World, are since discovered to be most useful Contrivances, and Evidences of the most perfect and consummate Wisdom; so in the government of the *rational and intelligent* World, in the dispensations of *Providence* towards Mankind, those very things, which by some Philosophers of old were urged as Arguments of an evil Principle, of a mischievous Supreme Cause, co-ordinate and repugnant to God the Author of all Good; will, at the great Day, (when the Reasons of things and the whole Counsel of God shall be more perfectly disclosed,) appear all to be most *Wise, and Gracious, and Good.*

DID our *Afflictions come forth of the dust*, and SERM.  
 our *troubles spring out of the ground*; Were there XXI.  
 no other Cause to produce them, no other Hand  
 to direct them, no other Counsel to design them,  
 no other Power to over-rule and remove them;  
 than the accidental Concourse of senseless Atoms,  
 than the fortuitous results of unguided Matter and  
 Motion, than the blind Effects of inevitable Fate,  
 or the mere Jumbles of unintelligible Chance; it  
 is plain there could be no rational Comfort and  
 Support to a considerate Mind, under the vari-  
 ous Misfortunes and Calamities of Life. For  
 what is the hope of the Unbeliever, when God  
 taketh away his Soul; I should say, when *Fate* or  
*Chance* taketh away his Soul? And on what  
 ground can the Confidence of the Atheist rely?  
 His Expectations at best are thin as a Spider's  
 web; and his Hopes as the light Chaff, which  
 the Wind scattereth away from the Face of the  
 Earth. His Prosperity and Mirth can be but  
 for a moment, and his Adversity must of Necess-  
 sity terminate in Despair. For what Relief is to  
 be expected from Fate or Chance, which has no  
 Understanding? And what Support is *that* Man  
 capable of in the days of Affliction, who does not  
 believe things are guided by a wise hand, which  
 can turn every thing finally to our Advantage?  
 How weak, how empty a Satisfaction is it to be  
 told that our Miseries arise from the *Necessity of*  
*Fate*, and therefore that it is to no purpose not to  
 be willing to submit to them! How small a Com-  
 fort



S E R M. fort is it, to consider that *others* perhaps are miserable as well as we; and that therefore we have no greater reason to complain, than they! How poor, how insipid a Relief is it, to understand that it cannot be long before all the Miseries and Calamities of Life will have an End put to them by *Death*; if at the same time our View be wholly bounded by that dark Prospect, and there be no Expectation beyond the Grave? And yet these are *all* the Comforts that Infidelity can afford, and *all* the Hopes of him that is *without God in the World*. In the moment of his *Prosperity*, he may say with the Fool in the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. ii. ver. 6, 3. *Come on, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth*; For our Life being extinguished, our body shall be turned into ashes, and our spirit shall vanish as the soft air. But in the days of *Sorrow*, he will be convinced of his Folly; and repent and groan for Anguish of Spirit, when it be too late; and his rejoicing will be turned into Despair. His past Pleasures will be remembered but as a Dream, and seem to him as a Shadow that departeth; his *present Trouble* will be insupportable; and his Fears of what may possibly be *to come*, will be unmixed and without Hope. The pretences of Philosophy, of Fortitude and Firmness of Spirit, of despising Pain, and looking upon Death as nothing, and as merely putting an End to our Being; will appear to be vain words, and mere empty Delusion; and *he only* is capable of any true Comfort and

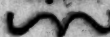
Sup-

Support, who is convinced that all things are directed well and to good Ends, by the All-wise Government of the Providence of God; and who, by a Life of Piety and true Holiness, has secured to himself finally, the Favour of that Supreme Disposer of all things.

THE same *Appearances of Nature*, the same *Arguments of Reason*, which prove to us the Being or Existence of God; prove also his Providence in governing the World, and his Inspection and directing of all Events: So that even from the *Light of Nature* itself, which, to impartial and well-disposed Persons, gives sufficient Evidences of the Being and Providence of God, it is manifest that no Affliction, no Trouble of any kind, can possibly come upon us without his Appointment or Permission. And *the Scripture*, to confirm and strengthen our Faith and Dependence upon God at all times and under all Circumstances, is very large and exprefs in this particular: *I am the Lord, and there is none else; — I form the Light, and create Darknes; I make Peace, and create Evil, (not moral, but natural Evil; ) I the Lord do all these things, II. xlv. 7. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up, 1 Sam. ii. 6. He maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his bands make whole, Job v. 18. Out of the mouth of the most High, proceedeth not Evil and Good? Lam. iii. 38. And it is a very remarkable Expression in the Law of Moses, that when a man was smitten and killed by*

S E R M.  
XXI.  
W

S E R M. by Accident, without any ill Intention at all in  
XXI. him that did it, his Misfortune is thus described:

 *Exod. xxi. 13. If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his band; To signify, that even those things, which to us seem the most casual and merely accidental, yet in respect of God are really providential, and could not happen but by his suffering them, and (for wise reasons) permitting them to be done. That is, they are not indeed done always by his Direction and Appointment; but, because they could not come to pass at all without his Knowledge and Permission, therefore we may be assured that he intends them for good, and to make use of them to serve some wise and good ends of Providence, in that it was not his pleasure, and he did not think fit to over-rule and prevent them. And accordingly the Prophet Amos puts the Question universally, not only concerning Judgments sent immediately by God's Command and Appointment, but concerning all, even those also which we call natural and accidental Evils; Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it? ch. iii. ver. 6. Which Words, some have been so very unreasonable as to interpret even of Sin itself, or moral Evil; (which is the highest Absurdity and Blasphemy :) But with respect to all natural Evils, (since second Causes have no Power but from and in subordination to the first,) it is strictly true: And therefore, even though we could not at all understand the reasons why God is pleased to permit them, yet since we*  
are



are sure they cannot but be of his permission, we **S E R M.**  
have more reason with all Patience and Resigna- **XXI.**  
tion to depend upon *him* that he intends and will  
direct them for good, than a Child can have, Ps. cxix.  
in things above its apprehension, to rely upon the 75.  
Kindness of a most affectionate Parent.

**B U T** 3dly, Though this might be a sufficient  
Satisfaction in *general*; yet further, we *are* able to  
instance in *many particular* wise and good Ends,  
for which Providence permits so many Afflictions  
to befall Mankind. The consideration of which  
must be referred to another Opportunity.

**S E R -**

# SERMON XXII.

## Of Resignation to the Divine Will in Affliction.

[A Sermon preached in Lent.]

JOB V. 6, 7.

*Although Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust,  
neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground;  
yet Man is born unto Trouble as the Sparks fly  
upward.*

SERM. XXII. **I**N a foregoing Discourse, I have observed that these Words contain in them,

1. A pathetic description of the Weakness and Vanity, the Sorrows and Calamities of human Life: *Man is born unto Trouble, as the Sparks fly upward.*

2. A Declaration, that these Miseries of human Life, do not arise from Chance or from Necessity, from blind Fate or unaccountable Accidents; but from the wise Disposition of the Providence of God, governing the World. *Affliction cometh*

*cometh not forth of the Dust, neither doth Trouble* SERM.  
*spring out of the Ground. Wherein* XXII.

3. It is implied, and intended to be inferred, that there are many just and good, wise and useful Ends; upon account of which, God permits so many Afflictions to fall upon Mankind; and the consideration therefore of which, (so far as we can discover them in this present dark and imperfect State,) ought to teach us Patience and cheerful Resignation to the Divine Will.

THE two former of these I have already discoursed on; and shown, that, since *Afflictions do not come forth of the Dust*, do not arise from Chance or from Necessity; but are all under the Disposal of the All-Wise Providence of God, governing the World; this one *general* consideration alone, ought sufficiently to secure our entire Trust and Dependence upon God, our Hope and Confidence in Him; so as to be an abundant Support and Comfort to us, under all the possible Accidents and Calamities of Life; even though we could not *at all* understand any of the *grounds* of his Acting, and the *Reasons* of his so dealing with us.

BUT seeing *this* is not wholly the Case; and that in this *general* Observation it seems moreover to be implied, and intended to be inferred, that there are also discoverable *in particular*, many just and good, wise and useful Ends; upon account of which, God permits so many Afflictions to fall upon Mankind; and the considera-



SERMON of which, ought to teach us Patience, and  
 XXII cheerful Resignation to the Divine Will: It re-  
 mains therefore, that we proceed now, in the

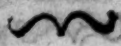
3<sup>d</sup> and last place, To consider *what* are  
 (some of the plainest and most satisfactory of)  
 those reasons, that *we are* capable of discovering;  
 upon account of which, it was best and fittest  
 that things should be so ordered as they are;  
 and in consideration whereof, we ought more  
*fully and readily* to acquiesce in the divine good  
 pleasure in all things.

AND *first*, We are to consider, that some of  
 those things which we usual esteem among the  
 Troubles and Afflictions of life, are such as may  
*justly* and must *necessarily* be resolved into the *ab-*  
*solute Sovereignty and Dominion* of God. Of this  
 kind, are Mortality in general, and the Short-  
 ness of human Life; the unequal Distribution  
 of Riches and Honour, and the good things of  
 this present Life; the different capacities, and  
 abilities of Mind; the different tempers and  
 constitutions of Body; the different states and con-  
 ditions, wherein God has originally placed men  
 in the World. Of these things there *can*, there  
*needs* no other account to be given, than the ab-  
 solute Sovereignty and Dominion of God. For  
 infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, may  
 display itself in producing what Variety of Crea-  
 tures he pleases; and in communicating to them  
 his free Bounties, in what measure and propor-  
 tion he thinks fit. He that had no Obligation,  
 no

no Want or Necessity upon him, to give Being S E R M.  
to any thing at all; may give Being to his Crea- XXII.  
tures for what Duration he pleases; and distri-   
bute his absolute and unconditionate Favours,  
without giving *any* account of his Ways. It is no  
just ground of complaint in *Men*, that they were  
not created in the condition of *Angels*; any more  
than it is an injury to *inferior Creatures*, that they  
are not indued with the Capacities of *Men*. Nei-  
ther is it a wrong to those who are born with low-  
er Capacities and to meaner Circumstances, that  
they are made inferior to others; But they have  
*much more reason* to be thankful for what they *have*,  
than to be displeased for want of what they *have*  
*not*. It is sufficient, if, in matters of *Reward and*  
*Punishment*, God in the End deals equitably with  
all his rational Creatures; and disposes of them  
according to the proportion of the several deserts,  
of each of them in their respective States. But in  
the *original appointment* of the *State and Condition*  
of their Nature, there is no room for any other  
consideration, than that of the absolute Sove-  
reignty of infinite Power, and the various Exer-  
cise of infinite Wisdom. The Servant who gain-  
ed four Talents by the Improvement of two, it  
was *just* that he should be rewarded with four  
Cities; and that the Reward of ten Cities should  
be allotted to *him*, who by a right use of five Ta-  
lents had improved them to ten. But why *origi-*  
*nally* the one should be intrusted with five Talents,  
and the other but with two; of this there needs

SERMON. and can no other account be given, but this; *Is it*  
 XXII. *not lawful for God, to do what he pleases with his*  
 own? and Shall the thing formed say unto him that  
 formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not  
 the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to  
 make one Vessel to Honour and another to Dishonour?  
 Not, one person unconditionally to final Happi-  
 ness, and another to Misery; But (as the same A-  
 postle expressly explains himself, 2 Tim. ii. 20.)  
*In a great house there are not only vessels of Gold, and*  
*of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth; and some*  
*to honour, and some to dishonour.* That is: Hath  
 not the Master a right to employ his Servants in  
 what several Stations he pleases, more or less ho-  
 nourable; provided, in his final distribution, he  
 deals equitably with each of them, in their sever-  
 al and respective degrees? As the Glory of the  
 natural World consists in that beautiful Variety of  
 things, whereof the whole is composed: So in  
 the Moral World, God has made rational Crea-  
 tures of various Capacities, and placed them in  
 different Stations: And it imports not to each  
 one's final State, what his present Station is, but  
 how well he behaves himself in that Station. The  
 Scripture, as well as the reason of the thing itself,  
 frequently refers us to this sovereign Power of  
 God, in accounting for the unequal distribution  
 of both temporal and spiritual Advantages. *He*  
*plucketh down one, and setteth up another; He maketh*  
*poor, and maketh rich; He bringeth low, and lift-*  
*eth up; He causeth one Nation or Person to be*  
 rich



rich and powerful, and another to be poor and SERM.  
weak. He reveals himself to one people in one XXII.  
manner, and to another in a different manner;   
and in all this, there is neither Reward nor Punishment, but the various exercise of his Wisdom and Power over his Creatures, without wrong or injury to any of them. He chose the Nation of the Jews to be his peculiar people, to reveal his Law to them in a particular manner, and to make them the Standard of true Religion to the World; *He did not deal so with any other nation, neither had the Heathen knowledge of his Laws.* And this St. Paul ascribes to the absolute Will and Pleasure of God, who may dispose of his unconditionate Favours in what manner and proportion he thinks fit: Rom. ix. 10, 11. *When Rebekkah had conceived by one, even by our Father Isaac; the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil; that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* Which Text, has therefore only seemed difficult, because men have not usually attended what that purpose of God according to Election was, which the Apostle there declares should stand: For, was it a Purpose of electing one to eternal Happiness, and the other to eternal Misery? No; but of causing the elder to serve the younger. The words themselves are express: *That the purpose of God, saith he, according to election,*

SERM. *might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.*

XXII. God might appoint whom he pleased, to be the  
 ~~~~~ Father of the more powerful Nation, the Progenitor of his peculiar people; and yet there was plainly no unrighteousness with God; no wrong or injury done to *him*, upon whom that Favour was not conferred, which could of right be claimed by neither. To apply this, or any other Texts of like importance, to men's *final and eternal* estate of Rewards and Punishments in another World; is indeed charging God wrongfully, and putting the greatest abuse that can be upon Holy Scripture, wherein God so constantly declares that he is *no Respector of Persons*, and that every man *shall be judged finally according to his works*. But *which* shall be *here* superior, and *which* shall serve; *who* shall in *this Sense* be hated, and *who* be loved; (all which is comparative only, and not absolute; and in which there is nothing of Reward or Punishment, but merely a variety of distribution of undeserved Favours;) in this, God has an absolute Right of acting by his Sovereign Power and Supreme Authority, and of doing what he pleases with his own. And since every thing that we all enjoy proceeds wholly from God's *free* goodness and bounty; no man, whether he has received less or more, many advantages or fewer, has *any* just reason of complaint, *any* ground to say unto his Maker, *Why hast thou made me thus?* This is the account St. Paul gives, of God's first calling the people of the Jews; and the same  
 he

he gives, of his afterwards rejecting them again, SERM.
 and taking in the Gentiles. *I will have mercy on* XXII.
whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion
on whom I will have compassion: That is, God only,
 and not short-sighted Man, is the proper Judge,
 upon whom, upon what Persons or Nations, it is
 fittest and wisest for him to bestow his Favours.
 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same
 lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another un-
 to dishonour? What, if God, willing to show his
 Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured
 with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to
 destruction; And that he might make known the
 Riches of his Glory, on the vessels of mercy, which
 he had afore prepared unto Glory? Even Us, whom
 he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the
 Gentiles, Rom. ix. 15, 21, 22. In all which, there
 is no declaration of any arbitrary proceeding in
 God, with respect to the last and great Judgment;
 as some have very unreasonably apprehended:
 (For, the long-suffering here mentioned towards
 the vessels of wrath, i. e. the unbelieving Jews,
 was in expectation even of their Repentance and
 Amendment; and the vessels of mercy here de-
 scribed, are not particular persons singly consi-
 dered, but the whole Body of Christians as opposed
 to the whole Nation of the Jews, and as including
 both Gentile as well as Jewish Believers; Even Us,
 saith the Apostle, whom he has called, not of the
 Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?) But the plain
 and whole intention of the words, is to justify

S E R M. God's dealing with the Nation of the *Jews*, in re-
 XXII. jecting *them* and receiving in the *Gentiles*; and to
 ~~~~~ show, that men have no just reason to complain  
 against God, for manifesting his Power and Glory  
 in different dispensations to different Persons at  
 different times, and for distributing differently  
 his undeserved Bounty, and allowing men vari-  
 ous and different advantages, after such manner  
 as he himself thinks fit: Inasmuch as they who  
 enjoy the fewest advantages, receive always more  
 than they deserve or can claim; and have no  
 wrong or injury done to them, by the abounding  
 of God's free Goodness to others. It was no in-  
 justice at the first to other Nations, that God, out  
 out of his free Bounty, was pleased to bless in a  
 singular manner, the Posterity of faithful *Abra-*  
*ham* for many Generations; nor was it afterwards  
 any injury to the *Jews*, that God was pleased to  
 receive the *Gentiles* likewise, into a participation  
 of the same Favour and Blessings with themselves.  
 So far as the Advantages of God's peculiar people  
 were *temporal*, the consideration of his *Sovereign*  
*Power and Authority* is a sufficient and satisfactory  
 account of the Difference; But as to men's *spiritual*  
*and eternal* concern, the *Judge of all the Earth*  
 knows how to do what is right; *With Equity will*  
*be judge the Nations*, and will make an equitable  
 and proportionable Allowance, for the unequal  
 circumstances of every man's case. Yet, even  
*here* also, there is no injustice, in giving men dif-  
 ferent opportunities and different advantages; in

en-

entrusting them with different Talents; and put-  
 ting into the hands of some, according to his own  
 good pleasure, a greater possibility of obtaining  
 larger Rewards. Neither, further, in *this* likewise  
 can there be any ground of complaint, if he shall  
 still think fit to make use of his Supreme Right,  
 in giving freely as great a Recompence to some  
 of whom he has not exacted so severe a Service,  
 as to others who may imagine themselves, by the  
 performance of a stricter Duty, to have acquired  
 for themselves a Title to a more ample Reward.  
 Our Saviour represents this to us in the Parable  
 of the Labourers in the Vineyard, who having  
 been hired at different times of the Day, and re-  
 ceiving each of them in the Evening the same Re-  
 ward; those which had been hired in the Morn-  
 ing, though they received their full Payment, yet  
 were displeased at their Lord's free Bounty, in  
 giving the same to those who had been hired last;  
 and murmured against him, saying; *These last have  
 wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them  
 equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat  
 of the Day: But he answered one of them, and said;  
 Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree  
 with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy  
 way; I will give unto this last, even as unto thee:  
 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine  
 own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?* St. Matth.  
 xx. 12. The Parable may be understood, to re-  
 spect God's dealings either with the *Jews* and *Gen-  
 tiles* in different Ages of the World, or with Per-  
 sons

S E R M. sons converted to the Belief of the Gospel in different Periods of their Lives. God's various distribution of his free Gifts and undeserved Mercies, affords no just reason of complaint to those, who only want what no man has a right to claim, and what those who have, must acknowledge to be of mere Bounty. And this is plainly the case in most of those things, which we are apt to look upon as some of the greatest Afflictions and Calamities of Life. They often are not any real and positive infliction of Judgments from the hand of God, but merely the original differences of men's state and circumstances, the variety of God's Creation, the different Talents committed to men's charge, the different Stations God has placed men in, for their various Trials, and in order to the exercise of a diversity of Duties. *Poverty* has not always the Nature of an Affliction or Judgment, but is rather merely a State of Life, appointed by God, for the proper Trial and Exercise of the Virtues of *Contentment*, *Patience*, and *Resignation*: And for *one* man to murmur against God, because he possesses not those Riches which he sees given to another; is the *wrath* that *killeth the foolish man*, and the *envy* that *slayeth the silly one*; Job v. 2. The like may be said of *want of Honour and Power*, *want of Children* to succeed in our Estates and Families, *Weakness of Body*, *Shortness of Life*, and the like; nay, and even of *spiritual* disadvantages themselves likewise; *want of capacity* and good understanding, *want of knowledge* and



and instruction, want of many *opportunities* and S E R M.  
means of improvement which others enjoy. None XXII.  
of all which, are any just ground of complaint  
against God, or any reason why we should not  
with all Satisfaction acquiesce in his divine good  
Pleasure; since all these things are only different  
distributions of such free Gifts, as he, not be-  
ing obliged to bestow on *any* man, may there-  
fore without controversy divide to *every* man in  
what measure and proportion he himself thinks  
fit: Only *this* we may depend upon, that in such  
measure only will he *exact* our Duty, as he en-  
ables us to *perform* it; and that to whom little is  
given, of him shall not much be required: And  
this brings all the *seeming inequalities* in the World,  
to a *real equality* at last; so that *he that gathers*  
*much, has nothing over; and he that gathers little,*  
*has no lack.* And we may justly apply to God's  
general dealings with all Mankind, the exclama-  
tion St. Paul uses upon occasion of his wonderful  
*particular dispensations to the people of the Jews*  
*and Gentiles; O the depth of the Riches both of the*  
*Wisdom and Knowledge of God; How unsearchable*  
*are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*  
In all circumstances of Life therefore, we are not  
to be uneasy that God has made us inferior to  
others; or that he has set before us, greater hard-  
ships and difficulties to go through; or that he  
has given us less abilities, and fewer opportuni-  
ties than others: But we are to apply ourselves  
wholly, ( with all acquiescence and resignation, )  
to

SERMON to the proper Duties of *that* Station, or of *those*  
 XXII. Circumstances, wherein God has been pleased to  
 place us. *Poverty* is not an Argument to envy  
 the rich; but a strong Obligation to study the  
 Duties of Humility, Contentment and Resignation.  
*Ignorance* and want of Capacity; meanness  
 of Parts and want of Instruction, is not a reason  
 to murmur that God has not entrusted us with  
*more* Talents; but an Admonition to take care  
 that we make a right improvement of those *few*  
 that are given us. Weakness of *Body*, is not a  
 just occasion to repine against God, for not giving  
 us the Strength and Health wherewith he has  
 blessed some others; but a continual Argument  
 to us, to exercise and improve such Virtues as  
 are more peculiar to the *Mind*. The consideration  
 of the *Uncertainty* and *Shortness* of *Life* itself, ought  
 not to make us spend our Time in fruitless complaints  
 of the Vanity and Meanness of our State; but to cause  
 us perpetually to consider, that it is not of so great  
 importance how *long* we live, as how *well*: For (as it is  
 excellently expressed in the Book of *Wisdom*,) *honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by numbers of years; but Wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted Life is old age.*

Secondly, IT is to be considered, that a great  
 part of the troubles of Life, and the Afflictions  
 we are apt to complain of, are not the immediate  
 and original appointment of *God at all*; but the  
 mere *natural* Effects and Consequences of our own  
 Sins.

Sins. 'Tis true, it is indeed the wise constitution S E R M.  
of Providence, which thus ordered and disposed XXII.  
the nature of things at first, that most Sins should  
even in the *natural* consequences of things, be  
some time or other attended with their proper  
Punishment. But I consider it not now in *that*  
*respect*, as being, *upon the whole*, the wise Ap-  
pointment of God, to convince us of the Folly of  
Sin, and to lead us to Repentance; but as being  
*in particular*, in the present State and Order of  
things, the mere *natural* Effect and Consequence  
of our own foolish and sinful choice. Which con-  
sideration alone, ought to make us acquiesce with  
all Humility and Patience, under that Burden  
which not God but our *own hands* have laid upon  
us: For, *why should a living man complain, a man*  
*for the punishment of his Sins?* Why should he mur-  
mur against God, when he *eateth but the Fruit of*  
*his own Ways*, and is filled only with the natural  
Consequences of *his own devices?* *The Foolishness*  
*of Man* (as Solomon excellently expresses it, *Prov.*  
*xix. 3.*) *perverteth his own way, and then his heart*  
*fretteth against the Lord.* Very unreasonably and  
unjustly. For, if Poverty be the Effect of Ex-  
travagance and Profuseness, and a Man's Sub-  
stance be consumed by riotous living: If Pain and  
Diseases of Body, be the Effect of Debauchery  
and intemperate Courses; and the Comforts of  
Age be prevented by the Follies of Youth: If  
Anxiety and continual Vexation of Mind, be the  
Vanity of Covetousness; and the *sore travel* of  
him



S E R M. him that *has neither Child nor Brother*; of whom  
 XXII. the Scripture says, that *there is no end of all his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my Soul of good*; These Troubles, are such as neither come forth of the dust, neither do they spring out of the ground, neither can they be complained of, as proceeding from the *hand of God*; but they are only the *natural* Effects of men's own Follies, and the fulfilling the Prophecies so often repeated in Scripture, that they who *plow wickedness*, shall *reap iniquity*, Hos. x. 13. and they who *sow iniquity*, shall *reap vanity*, Prov. xxii. 8. And yet, even *these* also, the Afflictions which are the Consequences of our own Folly, may by a wise Improvement, by bearing them as becomes us, and by exercising ourselves to Wisdom under them; even *these* also, may become the matter of an excellent Virtue, and may turn into the Occasion of much religious Advantage.

*Thirdly*, It is to be considered, that some of the greatest Afflictions and Calamities of Life, are the Effects of God's publick Judgments upon the World, for the Wickedness and Impiety of *others*. Wherein if virtuous and good men be sometimes involved, it ought to be a sufficient Satisfaction to them to consider, that *this* is not the proper Time for Rewards and Punishments to take place upon particular Persons. And, since they know God has reserved to *another State* the final and equitable distribution of Justice according to every  
 man's

man's desert; wherein he will give a perfect *Ac-* S E R M.  
*count of all his Matters*; wherein every inequality XXII.  
shall be exactly set right, and every circumstance  
of each Person's case be considered and adjusted;  
when God will perfectly justify himself in all his  
Proceedings, and *every mouth shall be stopped be-*  
*fore him*; why should they be uneasy, that God  
*for the present* suffers second causes to take their  
regular course, and does not work perpetual mi-  
racles to deliver them from the common incidents  
of human Nature, and from the publick misfor-  
tunes of the World? It is recorded of *Josiah King*  
*of Judah*, 2 Kings xxiii. 25. *that like him was there*  
*no King before him, that turned to the Lord with*  
*all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all*  
*his Might, neither after him arose there any like him:*  
*Yet the Lord suffered him to fall by the sword, and*  
*turned not from the fierceness of his great Wrath*  
*wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, be-*  
*cause of all the Provocations that Manasseh his Pre-*  
*decessor had provoked him withal*; and also for the  
*innocent blood that he had shed, which the Lord*  
*would not pardon*, 2 Kings xxiv. 4. And in a ge-  
neral denunciation of the severest Wrath of God  
against *Jerusalem*, he threatens by the Prophet  
*Ezekiel*, ch. xxi. ver. 3. *that he would cut off from*  
*it the righteous and the wicked*. In which case, it  
ought to be a sufficient Satisfaction to truly pious  
and religious persons, that God has reserved for  
them their portion in another Life.

THESE

SERM. THESE are *some* of the *many* considerations,  
XXII. which ought to oblige us, in *all* Circumstances of  
 Life whatsoever, *fully and readily* to acquiesce in  
the divine good Pleasure. There are others yet  
behind, which are grounds not only of *Acquies-*  
*cence and Submission*, but even of *Thankfulness* also  
to God for sending upon us Afflictions greatly to  
our Advantage: Such are those, which, by the  
more immediate Appointment of God, are in-  
tended and fitted to teach us *Humility*, to lead us  
to *Repentance*, to wean us from an *over-sord love*  
*of the World*, to make *Trial and Improvement of*  
*our Faith*, and to make eminent *Examples* of Pa-  
tience and Resignation, Fortitude and Contempt  
of the World. But these I must refer to another  
Opportunity.



---



---

## SERMON XXIII.

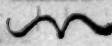
The End of GOD's afflicting Men.

[*Preached in Lent.*]

---

JOB V. 6, 7.

*Although Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust,  
neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground;  
yet Man is born unto Trouble as the Sparks fly up-  
wards.*

**T**HAT none of the Afflictions which SERM.  
befal Mankind, are the Effects either XXIII.  
of blind Chance or of fatal Necessity;   
but that they are all under the direction of infi-  
nite Wisdom and Goodness governing the World,  
and *in the general* intended by Providence some  
way or other for our Advantage; I have already  
shown in a foregoing Discourse. I have also pro-  
posed *in particular*, some of the many Considera-  
tions, which ought to teach us Acquiescence and  
cheerful Submission to the divine Good-pleasure,  
and the several kinds and sorts of Afflictions,  
which we are perpetually subject to in the present  
VOL. IV. D d Life;

S E R M. Life; Namely, that *some* of those things which  
 XXIII. we usually reckon among the Troubles of Life,  
 are not properly *Judgments inflicted* upon us, but  
 merely the Effects of God's variously exercising  
 his infinite Power and Wisdom, his absolute So-  
 verignty and Dominion over his Creatures, in  
 placing men originally in such different States and  
 Conditions as he himself thought fit; whereof *no*  
*man* has reason to complain; because what *every*  
*man* enjoys, in whatever proportion it be, is still  
*all* only of free Goodness and mere Bounty: That  
 some *others* of the Troubles we are apt to com-  
 plain of are nothing but the *natural* Consequen-  
 ces of our own Sins; and therefore not at all  
 chargeable upon God: That *others* of them, are  
 the Effects of God's *publick* Judgments upon a  
 sinful World; from partaking of which Calami-  
 ties, if *particular*, good and pious persons are not  
 exempted *at present*; is it not abundantly suffi-  
 cient that God has *hereafter* appointed for them a  
 Day of exacter Retribution? These are sufficient  
 Grounds of *Contentment and Acquiescence*, of wil-  
 ling *Submission and Resignation* to the Divine Will.  
 But there are *other Considerations* still behind,  
 (which I am *now* to proceed to speak to,) which  
 will appear to be Arguments, not of *Contentment*  
 only and *patient Resignation*, but even of *Thank-*  
*fulness* also; Considerations, which will show, that  
 most of the Afflictions we are apt to be uneasy un-  
 der, *far* from being Arguments of God's neglect-  
 ing and disregarding us, are some of the greatest  
 Instances

Instances of his paternal Care and Affection to S E R M.  
wards us, and designed to tend very much to our XXIII.  
particular Benefit and Advantage. The Ends of  
*this* kind, which we have reason to believe God  
generally intends in the Afflictions he is pleased  
to send upon us, may be reduced to these four:

1. To teach us *Humility*, and a just Sense of our  
own *Unworthiness*.
2. To lead us to *Repentance* for our past Errors.
3. To *wean* us from an over-fond Love of the  
present *World*. And
4. To *try, improve, and perfect* our Virtues;  
and make some particular Persons eminent  
Examples of Faith and Patience to the  
World,

1. To teach us *Humility* and a just Sense of our  
own *Unworthiness*. Though *Pride* evidently was  
not made for man, nor a haughty Spirit for him  
that is born of a Woman; Though nothing is more  
absurd and unnatural, than for *Dust and Ashes* to  
be lift up against its Maker; and for the thing  
formed, to exalt itself against him that formed  
it; Though nothing can be more unreasonable  
and ridiculous, than for *Man, whose breath is in  
his nostrils*, to despise his Brother, and to behave  
himself insolently towards him who is of the same  
*Nature and Dignity*, as well as of like Passions,  
with himself; yet in Fact so it is, that often *Man  
being in Honour, hath no understanding*, Ps. xlix. 20.



S E R M. and, being puffed up with Prosperity, *considereth*  
 XXIII. *not whereof he is made, and remembreth not that*  
 he is *but dust*. Such is the Weakness of our Nature, that *when one is made rich, and when the glory of his house is increased, he is very apt to forget, that when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away with him, and that his glory shall not descend after him.* When Power is put into our hands, and a great Superiority of Worldly Advantages gives us Opportunity to judge in our own Cases; we are extremely apt, to make *Will* succeed in the place of *Reason*, and *Humour* or *Passion* instead of *Right*. And this, not only in Persons openly profane, and Despisers of Religion; But such is the Deceitfulness of Men's Hearts, that in a long Course of uninterrupted Prosperity, this secret Pride is apt to grow insensibly, even upon those who do not affect to practise Iniquity. The almost only certain and effectual Remedy of which Evil, and the proper Preservative against it, is that Mixture of *Afflictions* and Disappointments in the World, which, by the wise Order and Appointment of Providence, puts Men in mind of their own Weakness and Infirmary, brings them to a right Sense of themselves and of their Dependance upon God, puts them upon serious Consideration of the true State and Circumstances of things, and is therefore in Scripture called the *Discipline* and *Instruction* of the Lord; *Job xxxiii.*  
*16. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction; That he may withdraw man from his*  
 his

his purpose, and bide pride from man; — He is SERM. XXIII.  
 chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multi-  
 tude of his bones with strong pain, &c. St. Paul him-  
 self, though so eminent an example of Piety,  
 though so constant and indefatigable a Labourer  
 in the Work of his Ministry, though so singular an  
 Instance of Mortification and Contempt of the  
 World; yet declares concerning himself; 2 Cor.  
 xii. 7. that *lest he should be exalted above measure  
 through the abundance of the Revelations, there was  
 sent upon him an Affliction, which he calls the mes-  
 senger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted  
 above measure.* Which if so great a Man as St. Paul,  
 thought to be his own Case; who is there in these  
 later and corrupter Ages, that, in *Prosperity*, can  
 be sure of possessing his Soul with that Humility  
 and Meekness, which Adversity would teach him?  
 Or that, in *Adversity*, can be sure he should not  
 be puffed up by a course of Prosperity; so as to  
 make it to himself a much greater Evil, than the  
 Affliction he is now so uneasy under, and the Use-  
 fulness of which he is so loath to be sensible of?

2. ANOTHER End of God's sending Afflictions  
 and Troubles upon Men, is to lead us to *Repent-  
 ance* for our past Errors. This is excellently ex-  
 pressed by *Elibu*; (Job xxxvi. 8;) *If they be  
 bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction;  
 then he sheweth them their work, and their trans-  
 gressions that they have exceeded; he openeth also  
 their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they  
 return from iniquity.* When a wicked man pro-

SERMON. Speers in all his worldly affairs, and his designs are  
 XXIII. crowned with perpetual Success; when he is surrounded on all sides with undisturbed Plenty, and all his appetites are gratified with the constant enjoyment of Ease and Pleasure; 'tis no wonder that he forgets the God that is above, and considers not that *for all these things God will call him into judgment*: Good Admonition and Advice makes no impression upon his Mind, and the serious exhortations of Religion find no room to enter: He is apt to put far from him the evil day; and to say to his Soul, *Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry; we will fill ourselves now with new wine, and to-morrow shall be as this day and much more abundant* (Is. lvi. 12.) Persons in this State, the Scripture every where represents as in the most dangerous condition: *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, saith St. James, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter*; Jam. v. 5. *Wo to them that are at ease in Zion*; Amos vi. 1. *I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease*; Zech. i. 15. *Moab hath been at ease from his Youth, and he has settled on his lees*; Jer. xlviii. 11; i. e. has gone on carelessly, in a long and uninterrupted course of Wickedness. The greatest Blessing and Happiness, that can befall such persons as these; the greatest instance, of the mercy of God towards them; is, the sending upon them some great Affliction; which, like a severe medicine in a very dangerous distemper, may awaken them out of



of their Lethargy and Stupidity; may cause them SERM.  
 to *consider*, and entertain sober Thoughts; may XXIII.  
 bring them to a right understanding of themselves  
 and of their own Danger. The *silent* instruction  
 of Reason and true Wisdom; the soft voice of  
 God, in the gentle admonitions of Conscience  
 not yet terrified with any *great* Fear, is not at-  
 tended to, by inconsiderate Persons; is not heard  
 in the hurry of Passions, that have been long used  
 to prevail; and among a Multitude of Appetites,  
 which have been constantly accustomed to be gra-  
 tified without denial. But when the *Judgments*  
 of God are abroad in the Earth, then the *inhabi-*  
*tants of the world will learn righteousness*, II. xxvi.  
 9. Then Men begin to *consider* with themselves,  
 what their State and Condition is; and *Considera-*  
*tion*, is the Foundation of Repentance, the first  
 Motive and Beginning of Religion. Of this, an  
 eminent instance is recorded in the History of  
*Manasseh*; who, in his Prosperity, *made Judah and*  
*the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse*  
*than the Heathen whom the Lord had destroyed be-*  
*fore the children of Israel*: But in his Captivity,  
*when he was in Affliction, he besought the Lord his*  
*God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of*  
*his Fathers*, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9, 12. And the Ex-  
 ample of his *Repentance* was afterwards as emi-  
 nent, as that of his *Impiety* before had been per-  
 nicious. This is the proper Effect of God's *Judg-*  
*ments* in the World; and if these last and severest  
 Exhortations to Repentance, have not that due

SERM. Effect upon Sinners, their Case *then* becomes de-  
 XXIII. sperate and without Hope. Nothing *then* remains,  
 but that God leave them to themselves; For,  
*why should they be stricken any more? they will re-*  
*volt more and more,* If. i. 5. This is the greatest  
 and most extreme, of all the temporal Curses of  
 God; *I will not punish your daughters when they*  
*commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit*  
*adultery,* Hof. iv. 14. And it is the proper Conse-  
 quence of not being brought to Repentance by  
 this last Admonition, even by *Afflictions them-*  
*selves.* Thus God complains of the Impenitency of  
 the Jews, Amos iv. 6, &c. *I have given you want*  
*of bread in all your places, and have with-holden the*  
*rain from you, and have smitten you with blasting*  
*and mildew; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith*  
*the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after*  
*the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain*  
*with the sword; I have overthrown some of you, as*  
*God overbrow Sodom and Gomorrah; yet have ye*  
*not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* And it is set  
 down as part of the Character of the Kingdom of  
 the Beast, the Kingdom of *Antichristian Tyranny,*  
 the corruptest State of Men that ever was in the  
 World, Rev. xvi. 9, 11. that they *blasphemed the*  
*name of God, because of their pains and their*  
*plagues, but repented not of their deeds, to give*  
*glory to the God of Heaven:* That is, to return  
 from their Idolatries, Superstitions, and Follies, to  
 the rational Worship of the true God, in Righte-  
 ousness, Charity and Truth. This Incurable-  
 ness,

ness, is the worst and most desperate State that S E R M.  
wicked men can possibly arrive at in the present XXIII.  
World: But the *proper and natural* Effect of  
God's Judgments, if they would hearken to them,  
is to lead them to Repentance: *Wherefore doth a*  
*living man complain, a man for the punishment of*  
*his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn*  
*again to the Lord,* Lam. iii. 39, 40.

Now if Afflictions be thus fitted, in their proper Tendency, to convert the *wickedest* of men that are not utterly incorrigible; much *more* are they suited to convince *good* men of their failings, to make them sensible of their Errors, to bring them to more frequent and serious Consideration, and to a more perfect Repentance and Amendment. The very *best* of men, are far from being perfect: and *too many* good men, have even *great* imperfections, which they are not duly sensible of, but in a day of Affliction; and there are many Duties, and many Doctrines in Scripture, which Men are not apt to understand rightly, but in a time of Sorrow, and more serious Consideration. David himself confesses, *Pf. cxix. 71, 67. It is good for me, that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes; For, before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.* And that great Man Job, after his severe Trial, acknowledges before God, *Job xlii. 5, 6. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* The Sons of Jacob were never truly  
sen-



SERM. sensible of the greatness of their Crime in selling  
 XXIII. their Brother, till they found themselves in great  
 Distress in *Egypt*; And then *They said one to another*, Gen. xlii. 21. *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not bear; therefore is this distress come upon us.* And of the whole Nation of the *Jews*, it is remarked by the Psalmist, Ps. lxxviii. 34. *that when he slew them, then they sought him, and returned, and inquired early after God; and remembered that God was their Rock, and the High God their Redeemer.*

UPON this account, the Afflictions that God sends upon his People and Servants, are so frequently declared in Scripture to be Evidences of his Love and Care towards them. *When we are judged*, saith St. Paul, *we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world*, 1 Cor. xi. 32. And our Lord himself declares, Rev. iii. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent.* Which Exhortation, the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, thus excellently paraphrases: *My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth: If we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He*  
 for

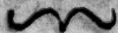
*The End of GOD's afflicting Men.*

411

our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. SERM.  
Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joy- XXIII.  
ous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth  
the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which  
are exercised thereby, Heb. xii. 5, &c. The Apostle  
allows, that Afflictions cannot indeed but be grie-  
vous to human Nature, when they are actually  
upon us: But the Consideration of the great Ad-  
vantage they may and are intended to turn to, by  
religious Improvement; is abundantly sufficient  
to make any ingenuous and considerate Temper,  
(which suffers not Passion and present Uneasiness  
to prevail wholly over Reason) to say with *Eli*,  
*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;*  
and with pious *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord*  
*hath taken away; Blessed be the Name of the Lord;*  
*For, Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and*  
*shall we not (patiently) receive evil?*

THERE is one way by which Afflictions of this  
kind, namely, such as are sent upon us by way  
of *Correction*, may in great measure be prevented;  
and that is, if we would take care so to behave  
ourselves, as not to stand in need of them; so to  
judge ourselves, as not to be judged of the Lord. *Job*  
*xxxiii. 27. God looketh upon men; and if any say,*  
*I have sinned, and perverted that which was right,*  
*and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his soul from*  
*going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.* But  
this must be understood only of this one particular  
kind of Afflictions; such as are intended for our  
Cor-

SER M. *Correction, and to lead us to Repentance for some*  
 XXIII. *particular Sins.*



3. ANOTHER End of God's sending Afflictions and Troubles upon men, is to *wean us from an over-fond love of the present world.* There is nothing that more hinders Men's Progress in Religion, nothing that more softens the Minds, and cools the Zeal even of good and well-disposed Persons, than a constant, careless, habitual enjoyment of, and affection to, even *those* pleasures of Life, which cannot perhaps be charged with being directly sinful: O Death, says the wise Son of Sirach, Eccclus. xli. 1. *How bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that has nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things!* As a continual Calm corrupteth the Waters; so a long and uninterrupted Prosperity, is a perpetual Danger and Temptation. Of the people of the Jews it is observed, Deut. xxxii. 15. that when *Jeshurun* waxed fat, he kicked, and forsook the God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. And it is no less true of the Christian Church, that when, upon the Emperor's first becoming Christian, it began to receive worldly Encouragement; the Contentions among Christians multiplied, and the Purity of their Manners decreased. And in our own Nation it has been justly observed, that true Religion never had so remarkable an Influence upon Men's Lives and Manners, as at such times when we were most apprehensive



hensive of its being in danger to be removed from SERM.  
us. For this Reason God has seldom chosen to XXIII.  
make his best Servants the most prosperous in the   
World. The Patriarchs did but *sojourn in the*  
*land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in*  
*tabernacles, and confessing that they were strangers*  
*and pilgrims in the earth; For they looked for a city*  
*which had foundations, whose builder and maker is*  
*God, Heb. xi. 9, 10. And our Saviour inculcates*  
no one thing so often upon his Disciples, as the  
Danger of worldly Ease and Plenty, and the *Bles-*  
*sedness of them that mourn.*

YET, on the other side, *Afflictions* have also  
their proper Temptations, to Impatience, and  
Discontent, and complaining against God; and  
*Prosperity*, if well employed, may become the  
Matter of an excellent Virtue: For, *Blessed is the*  
*rich, that is found without blemish, and hath not*  
*gone after gold; that hath been tried thereby, and*  
*and found perfect; that might offend, and hath not*  
*offended; or might do evil, and hath not done it,*  
Ecclus. xxxi. 8, 10. Wherefore it is best for us,  
not to be solicitous after either State; but, with  
all Submission, to leave that wholly to God; who  
knows, much better than we, what is most con-  
venient for us.

4thly, and lastly, ANOTHER End of God's send-  
ing Afflictions upon Men, is to try, improve, and  
perfect their Virtues, and make eminent *Examples*  
of their *Faith* and *Patience*. This was the case  
of *Job*, who was afflicted by the immediate hand  
of

SERM. of God; and this was the case of the *Apostles*, who  
 XXIII. were permitted to be persecuted by *wicked Men*; and St. Paul tells us concerning our Saviour himself, *Heb. ii. 10.* that he was *made perfect through sufferings*. Of such Afflictions as these, the Scripture declares that they are to be *gloried in*, because they *work Patience*, *Rom. v. 3.* and *Jam. i. 3.* that they *fall out unto the furtherance of the Gospel*, *Phil. i. 12.* that they are a *trial of Faith*, much more precious than of gold that perisbeth, though it be tried with fire, *1 Pet. i. 7.* That, by these, many are purified and made white and tried, *Dan. xii. 10.* and *xii. 35.* And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded; for God proved them, and found them worthy for himself; As gold in the furnace has he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering; And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble; They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people; and their Lord shall reign for ever, *Wisd. iii. 5.* &c.

I SHALL but just mention two Inferences from what has been said, and so conclude.

AND 1<sup>st</sup>, From what has been said it appears, that it is a very wrong and unjust Conclusion, to imagine, with *Job's* friends, that whoever is much afflicted, must consequently, have been very wicked, and that God is very angry with him. When a man's own conscience can apply his own Affliction to his past Sins, it is indeed very just and

and reasonable, that he should accept it as the S E R M.  
Punishment of Sin, and as an Argument to Re- XXIII.  
pentance; but he must by no means make another  
man's Affliction, an occasion of censuring his  
Neighbour; for, on the contrary, the Scripture  
declares, that *happy is the man whom God cor-  
recteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening  
of the Almighty; for he maketh sore, and bindeth  
up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole; Job  
v. 17. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O  
Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; Ps. xciv.  
12. And St. James, ch. i. ver. 12; Blessed is  
the man that endureth temptation; for when he is  
tried, he shall receive the crown of life.*

2dly, FROM what has been said, there appears  
great Reason for men to resign themselves with  
all patience to the Will of God; and to rely  
upon him with full Trust and Assurance, (in all  
possible circumstances of life,) that he will direct  
things finally to our best advantage. *Ecclus. ii.  
4. Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully;  
and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate;  
For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in  
the furnace of adversity.* This was the practice of  
David; who, when he was greatly distressed, en-  
couraged himself in the Lord his God; *1 Sam. xxx.  
6.* And this was the Resolution of the Prophet,  
wherewith I shall conclude; *Habbak. iii. 17;  
Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall  
fruit be in the vines; though the labour of the  
olive*



SER. M. olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat;  
**XXIII.** though the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and  
 there shall be no herd in the stalls; Yet will I re-  
 joice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my  
 Salvation.

## SERMON XXIV.

The Event of Things not always answerable to Second Causes.

[A Fast-Sermon.]

ECCLES. ix. 11.

*I returned, and saw under the Sun, that the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happeneth to them All.*

**T**HERE are some sort of persons in the World so slothful and negligent in their own Affairs, so hardly prevailed upon to undertake any thing that requires labour and diligence, so easily discouraged by any appearance of ill Success, or so heedless and unactive in the prosecution of whatever they are about; as if they were of Opinion even in temporal Matters,

S E R M. what in some Systems of Religion has been absurdly affirmed concerning *Spirituals*, that God does every thing in men and for men, leaving nothing for them to do for themselves; or as if they thought That Precept to be *literal* and *universal*, which our Saviour spake, with the *Latitude* of a moral admonition, to the *Apostles only*, and upon an extraordinary Occasion; Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed. Such persons as these, the wise Man elegantly describes in his Book of Proverbs: The Sluggard, saith he, will not plow by reason of the Cold; therefore shall he beg in Harvest, and have nothing: The slothful man saith, There is a Lion without; I shall be slain in the Streets, Prov. xxii. 13. And ch. xxiv. 30. I went by the Field of the slothful, and by the Vineyard of the man void of understanding; And lo, it was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered the Face thereof, and the Stone-wall thereof was broken down; — So shall thy Poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy Want as an armed Man. Nor is his Reproof and Admonition to those who are guilty of this Folly, less elegant than his Description of them, ch. vi. 6. Go to the Ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, yet provideth her Meats in the Summer, and gathereth her Food in the Harvest. And in the Words immediately before my Text, Eccles. ix. 10. Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy Might; do it with

S E R M.  
VIXX



Diligence; do it with Attention, Industry and Care. SERM.  
XXIV.

THERE are others, in a contrary Extreme; who rely with such Confidence on the Effects of their own Wisdom and Industry, and so presumptuously depend upon the natural and regular Tendencies of second Causes; as if they thought, either there was no superior Cause at all, on which the Frame of Nature depended; or at least, that the Providence of God did not condescend to direct the Events of Things, in this lower and uncertain World. And These are elegantly reprov'd in the Words of my Text; *I returned, and saw under the Sun, that the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happeneth to them All.*

I RETURNED: That is; in that vast Compass of Knowledge which *Solomon* had, in being able to survey the whole Extent of Nature, and to observe the Tempers and Dispositions of Men, and the different Events of Things in all variety of Times and Circumstances; he turned his Thoughts and Observations from one Subject to another. In the verse before the Text, he views the careless or negligent part of Mankind, and exhorts them to Diligence: And then *I returned*, saith he, in the Words of the Text; that is, he turned his View the other way, towards the confident or presumptuous; And them he bids to take notice, that the

Ecc 2

S E R M. *Race* is not always to the *Swift*, nor the *Battle* to  
 XXIV. the *Strong*; that is, that the *Events* of Things do  
 not always answer to the *Probabilities* of second  
 Causes, unless the Wisdom of God thinks fit by  
 the Direction of his good Providence to make  
 those Causes successful. *I returned, and saw* un-  
 der the Sun; that is, in the *whole Course* of this  
 lower and uncertain World, in the whole Com-  
 pass of human Affairs, in the Histories of all  
 Times or Ages, and in the Events that have hap-  
 pened to all Nations or People; I observed, saith  
 he, upon the largest View and most extensive Ex-  
 perience, that the *Race* is often *not* to the *Swift*,  
 nor the *Battle* to the *Strong*. The *Reason why* the  
 Events of Things do frequently fail in this man-  
 ner, of answering to the natural Probabilities of  
 second Causes; is, because many little and un-  
 foreseen Accidents unavoidably interposing, do  
 very often change the whole Course of Things,  
 and produce an Event quite contrary to what, in  
 all reasonable Probability, was to have been ex-  
 pected. The *swiftest Racer*, upon the least acci-  
 dental Slip, loses the Prize, to an Adversary much  
 slower than himself; and the *Potentest Armies*,  
 upon the least Disorder befalling them in a day  
 of Battle, have been forced to leave the Victory  
 to an Enemy, whom they before despised for his  
 inferior Force. *Accidents* these Things appear to  
*men*, because not possible to be foreseen or pre-  
 vented by *our* short and imperfect Understand-  
 ings: But, in the hands of *Providence*, the Causes  
 and Reasons of these even the *minuteest* Accidents

are

are all as clearly and distinctly known and deter-SERM.  
minate, as the *grossest* and most *obvious* Causes are XXIV.

apparently discerned by us. And by means of these unforeseen Causes, does God in his great Government of the Universe, constantly bring about his own Designs, in blessing or punishing Nations according to his own good Pleasure:

*Amos ii. 14. The Flight shall perish from the Swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his Force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself; neither shall he stand that handleth the bow, and he that is swift of foot, shall not deliver himself; neither shall he that rideth the horse, deliver himself. Again, Ps. xxxiii.*

*15. There is no King that can be saved by the multitude of an Host, neither is any mighty man delivered by much strength: A horse is counted but a vain thing to save a man, neither shall he deliver any man by his great strength: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that put their trust in his mercy. Solomon expresses the same Notion thus, Prov. xxi. 30. There is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the Lord; The Horse is prepared against the day of Battle, but Safety is of the Lord. And Hannah, in her prayer, recorded, 1 Sam. ii. 4, 9. The Bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with Strength: — The Lord will keep the Feet of his Saints, and the Wicked shall be silent in Darkness; for by Strength shall no man prevail. These are all, as it were, Paraphrases upon the Words of the Text; The Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong.*



SERM. IT follows: *neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor*  
 XXIV. *yet Riches to men of Understanding, nor yet Favour*  
 ~~~~~ *to men of Skill.* That is; As Strength and Agility  
 of *Body*, are not always successful in Proportion
 to the Degree of those Faculties; nor powerful
 Armies victorious, in Proportion to the Num-
 bers they consist of: So the Faculties and Abili-
 ties of the *Mind* likewise, Wisdom and Under-
 standing, Dexterity and Skill, are not always
 successful, as might regularly be expected, in
 obtaining Riches and Honour, Favour and Digi-
 nity in the World; But unseen Accidents, (*Ac-*
cidents with regard to *Men*, but with *God* wise
 Dispensations of *Providence*,) invisibly and inex-
 plicably turn the Course even of *these* things also;
 For *Time and Chance happeneth to them All*: Is. xlv.
 25. *God turneth wise men backward, and maketh*
their Knowledge foolish.

HAVING thus briefly explained the *Meaning*
 of the several Phrases contained in the Text; the
Doctrinal Observations I shall now draw from
 thence, are as follow:

1st, We may observe, that what men vulgarly
 call *Chance* or unforeseen *Accident*, is in Scripture
 always declared to be the *determinate Counsel and*
Providence of God. What careless and inconfi-
 derate men ascribe in common Speech to *Chance*
 or *Fortune*; that is, to *nothing at all*, but a mere
 empty word, signifying only their *Ignorance* of
 the true Causes of Things; this the Scripture
 teaches *Us* to ascribe to the all-seeing and all-di-
 recting

recting Providence of God; that we may acknowledge him in all our Ways; and be sensible of the true Author, from whom all the Good and all the Evil that befalls us, does either mercifully or justly proceed; *Dan. iv. 35. He doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* When a person is slain by Chance or Accident, as men vulgarly speak; the Scripture more accurately expresses it, saying, that God delivered such a one, into the hand of him that slew him without Design; *Exod. xxi. 13.* And in all other Instances, the same Notion is every where kept up in Scripture: *Prov. xvi. 33. The Lot is cast into the Lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord* And when the Apostles chose by Lot a Successor to Judas, they expressed their Sense of the divine Providence in the following words, *Acts i. 24. Thou, Lord, which knowest the Hearts of all men, show whether of these Two thou hast chosen.* And thus likewise in the words in the Text; it is the supreme Superintendency of Providence over all Events, which Solomon meant to establish, when he saith, *Time and Chance happeneth to them All.*

NEITHER is it, (as some, with very weak Pretences to Reason, have in this case been apt to imagine;) it is not, I say, merely in a pious manner of Expression, that the Scripture thus ascribes every Event to the Providence of God; but it is strictly and philosophically true in Nature and Reason,

SERM. son, that there is *no such thing as Chance* or *Acci-*
 XXIV. *dent*; it being evident that those words do not

signify any thing *really existing*, any thing that is truly an *Agent* or the *Cause* of any Event; but they signify, *merely* men's *Ignorance* of the real and immediate Cause. And this is so true, that very many even of those who have no Religion, nor any Sense at all of the Providence of God; yet know very well, by the Light of their own natural *Reason*, that there neither is nor can be any such thing as *Chance*, that is, any such thing as an Effect without a Cause; And therefore what *others* ascribe to *Chance*, *they* ascribe to the operation of *Necessity* or *Fate*. But *Fate* also is itself in reality as *truly nothing*, as *Chance* is. Nor is there in *Nature* any *other efficient* or proper Cause of any Event; (of any *Event*, I say: For concerning *Truths* in themselves essentially, eternally and invariably necessary, I am not speaking: But of all the variable *Events* that happen in the Universe, there is and can be in *Nature* no other proper and *efficient* Cause;) but only the *Free Will* of *rational and intelligent* Creatures, acting within the Sphere of their limited Faculties; and the *Supreme Power of God*, directing, by his omnipresent Providence, (according to certain wise Laws or Rules, established by, and entirely depending upon his own good pleasure) the inanimate Motions of the whole material and unintelligent World.

2dly, FROM

2dly, FROM the Words of the Text I observe, SERM.
XXIV.
 that the all-directing Providence of God, which governs the Universe; does not superintend only the *great* Events in the World, the Fates of Nations and Kingdoms; so that, without the direction of Providence, the *strongest* and most numerous Armies are not victorious in *Battle*; but its Care extends, even to the Concerns of *single* Persons; so that, without the Blessing of God, neither *Riches*, nor *Favour*, nor *any temporal Advantage*, can certainly be obtained by any thing that *Man* can do: Nay, that even in matters of still *smaller* moment, not so much as a *Race* is gained by the *Swift*, without the hand of Providence directing the Event. When men observe how *our* Attention is distracted with a multiplicity of Objects, and can very hardly be fixed on more than one thing at once; they are too carelessly apt to imagine, that Providence itself either cannot, or that it is beneath its Dignity to condescend to interpose in the numberless small Events of Nature or Chance. But the *Scripture* tells us otherwise, and *right Reason* also joins with it herein. For as *Chance* is nothing, so *Nature* also is nothing but an empty word. Every *Effect*, every *Event*, must have a *real Cause*; must proceed, immediately or mediately, from that which has a *true Existence* and *active Power*. And to an omnipresent Mind, there is no more difficulty in attending to *every thing* at one and the same Time, than to *any one thing*. Not only *piously* therefore, but even with the *strictest*
 and

SERM. and most philosophical Truth of Expression, does
 XXIV. the Scripture tell us, that God commandeth the
 Ravens, 1 Kings xvii. 4. that they are his direc-
 tions, which even the Winds and the Seas obey; that
 he causes his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the
 Good; that God prepared a Gourd, and a Worm
 to smite it that it withered, Jonah iv. 7. that God
 feedeth the Fowls of the Air, Matth. vi. 26. and,
 without him, not a Sparrow falls to the ground;
 ch. x. 29. Nay, that he clothes even the lilies, and
 the grass of the field, Matth. vi. 30. and, with
 him, the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

It is true; all these things are plainly owing
 to second Causes. And so likewise are all the
 greater Instances mentioned by Solomon in the
 Text. It is as much according to the Course of
 Nature, that the Strong should sometimes lose a
 Battle by Accident, as that they should generally
 gain it by Strength; and that unforeseen hindran-
 ces should sometimes cause the swiftest Runner to
 lose the Race, as that Agility and Nimbleness of
 Body should make him generally win it. My

3d OBSERVATION therefore is; that things be-
 ing brought about according to the course of Na-
 ture by second Causes, is not at all inconsistent
 with their being nevertheless justly and truly a-
 scribed to the Providence of God. It is Time and
 Chance, says the Text, that happens to them all;
 that happens frequently to prevent all the Proba-
 bilities there mentioned. The wise Man does
 not hereby mean, that they are prevented by Mi-
 racle:

raile: For then he would not have used the vulgar words, of *Time and Chance*. Nor does he mean on the contrary, that they are prevented by blind and unintelligent *Fate*; For this would have been contrary to the whole Design of his Book, and of all the rest of the Scripture, as well as to common Reason: But his meaning is; that the *Providence of God*, by means of *natural Causes*, which are all entirely of *his Appointment*, and *Instruments only* in *his hand*; does often, for wise Reasons in his Government of the World, disappoint the most probable Expectations. Ridiculous therefore is the arguing of the Infidel and Irreligious; who presently thinks himself secure of excluding the *Providence of God*, if he can but show a thing to be brought about by *natural Causes*. Most ridiculous, I say, and ignorant is this manner of reasoning: For, *what* are *natural Causes*? Nothing but those *Laws and Powers*, which God merely of his *own good pleasure* has implanted in the several parts of Matter, in order to make them Instruments of fulfilling his supreme Will. Which *Laws and Powers*, as he at *first appointed* them, so nothing but the same good Pleasure of God, *continually preserves them*. And they neither *exist* nor *operate* in any moment of Time, but by Influence and Action derived to them (mediately or immediately) from his all-governing Will. So that he foresees perpetually, what Effect every Power and Operation of Nature tends to produce, and could (if he thought fit) exactly with

S E R M. with the same Ease, cause it to produce a *different*
 XXIV. Effect, from that which it now does. From whence
 it follows inevitably, to the entire Confusion of
 Atheists, that all those things which they call
natural Effects, are in very Truth as much the
 Operation of God, (though perhaps not so im-
 mediately) as even Miracles themselves. And to
 argue against *Providence* from the Observation of
 the regular *Course of natural Causes*; is as if a man
 should conclude from the *uniformity* of a large and
 beautiful Building, that it was not the Work of
 Men's hands, nor contrived by any free Agent,
 because the Stones and the Timber were laid *uni-
 formly and regularly*, in the most constant, natu-
 ral, and proper Order.

4thly, T H E last doctrinal Observation I shall
 draw from the Text, is; that since the whole
 Course of Nature in the ordinary Method of
 Causes and Effects, and all those unexpected
 turns of things which men vulgarly call Chance
 and Accident, are entirely in the Hand of God,
 and under the continual Direction of his Provi-
 dence; it follows evidently, (and it is a Doctrine
 worthy the most serious Consideration of all wick-
 ed Men) that God can, whenever he pleases, even
without a Miracle, punish the disobedient: And
 no Swiftneſs, no Strength, no Wiſdom, no Ar-
 tifice, ſhall in any manner avail, or enable them
 to eſcape the Vengeance, which even *natural*
Causes only, by the Direction of him from
 whom they receive their Nature, bring upon
 Offenders,

Offenders. He can punish by Fires and Famine, SERM.
 by Plagues and Pestilences, by Storms and Earth- XXIV.
 quakes, by domestick Commotions, or by fo- 
 reign Enemies. He can, as *Moses* elegantly ex-
 presses it, make the *Heavens over men's Heads*
Brass, and the *Earth under their Feet Iron*, or the
 very *Beasts of the Field to rise up against them*: Or,
 as it is in the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. v. 22, 23, 20.
 he can cause that a mighty *Wind shall stand up*
against them, or the *Waters of the Sea shall rage*
against them, and the *World shall fight for him*
against the unwise. He can, by means of the least
Accident, as we ignorantly stile it, discomfit the
 greatest Armies before a few of their Enemies:
 As 2 *Chr.* xxiv. 24. *The Syrians came with a small*
company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great
Host (of the Israelites) into their hand; because
they had forsaken the Lord God of their Fathers.
 Neither shall any *Swiftnefs* deliver them from the
 Pursuer: *Is.* xxx. 16. *Ye said, We will flee upon*
horses; therefore shall ye flee: And we will ride up-
on the Swift; therefore shall they that pursue you,
be swift: One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of
One; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee; 'till ye be
left as a Beacon upon the top of a Mountain, and as
an Ensign on a Hill. Nay, without any visible ex-
 ternal Cause at all, to which such an Effect can
 be ascribed; Providence can secretly blast, and
 insensibly cause to moulder away, the greatest
 Power, Riches, or other worldly Advantages
 what-

SERMON whatsoever: *Pf. xxxix. 11. When thou with re-*

XXIV. bukes dost chasten Man for Sin, thou makest his

Beauty to consume away, like as a Moth fretting a garment; every man therefore is but Vanity. And it is the exceeding Stupidity of profane Men, not to be moved hereby to repent, and give glory to the God of Heaven, who hath Power over these Plagues, *Rev. xvi. 9.* The Meaning of this whole Observation is, not that these Judgments are always certain Signs of God's displeasure against all the particular Persons upon whom they at any time fall; (for this our Saviour has expressly warned us against, as a most uncharitable Conclusion:) But whether they be Punishments for Sin, (as they generally, though not always are;) or whether they be only Trials of Men's Virtue, (as they sometimes are designed to be;) or whether they be Means of weaning them from this transitory and uncertain World: or whatever other Ends Providence brings about thereby; still they are always Effects of the same all-wise divine Providence; which ought to be acknowledged and submitted to as such, and whose Designs no Power or Wisdom of frail and vain men can oppose or prevent.

THE Practical Inferences, arising naturally from what has been said, are as follow:

1st, If these things be so, then let the greatest and most powerful of wicked men consider, that they have nothing in this World either to boast of,

of, or to rely upon. *Jer. ix. 23, Let not the wise man glory in his Wisdom, let not the rich man glory in his Riches, neither let the mighty man glory in his Might:* For all these Advantages are frequently defeated, and *Time and Chance* happeneth to them all. *I will not trust in my Bow, saith the Psalmist, neither shall my Sword save me; But it is Thou that savest us from our Enemies, Ps. xlv. 6.* Wise therefore was the Answer of the King of Israel, to an insulting Message from the King of Syria, *1 Kings xx. 11. Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his barness, boast himself, as he that putteth it off.* The Event showed, that his Admonition was reasonable; and the Syrian's Pride, was but the immediate fore-runner of his Destruction. For the same purpose, it is recorded of *Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon*, that when his Greatness was grown and reached unto Heaven, and his Dominion to the End of the Earth, *Dan. iv. 22.* it was said unto him, *ver. 25. They shall drive thee from Men, and thy dwelling shall be with the Beasts of the Field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as Oxen, and they shall wet thee with the Dew of Heaven, —* (it is the Description of a very severe and mortifying Distemper of Mind;) *'till thou know that the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* This is the plain Design of Providence, in such extraordinary Events; to bring Men to an Acknowledgment, of *Him* on whom they depend; to bring them

SERM.
XXIV.

SER M. them to a right Knowledge of God and of them-
 XXIV. selves: That he may with-draw Man from his
 Purpose, Job xxxiii. 17. and hide Pride from Man.
 Well (indeed) may Pride be said to be hid from
 Men, when not only the Success of their greatest
 Advantages, but even their very Life itself, is
 uncertain every moment. Boast not thyself of to-
 morrow, Prov. xxvii. 1. for thou knowest not what
 a day, what an hour, may bring forth. For as the
 Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the
 Birds that are caught in the Snare; so are the Sons
 of Men snared in an evil time, when it falleth sud-
 denly upon them; Eccles. ix. 12. The rich Man in
 the Gospel, resolved to pull down his barns, and
 build bigger; and then it was said unto him,
 Thou Fool, this night shall thy Soul be required of
 thee. In the Days of Noah, Men eat and drank,
 they married and were given in marriage, until the
 day that Noah entered into the Ark. And then the
 Flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise in the
 days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought,
 they sold, they planted, they builded: But the same
 day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and
 brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. And
 so also shall it finally be in the great Day, when the
 Son of Man is revealed, Luke xvii. 30. and
 2dly, If nothing happens in the World, with-
 out the divine Providence; then good Men have
 a sufficient ground of Trust and Reliance upon
 God, at all Times and under all Dangers. Not,
 that

that God will *always* deliver them, or cause them S E R M.
to prosper in the present World; for he often sees XXIV.
it better to determine otherwise: But they may
rely with Assurance, that nothing can befall them
but what *he* judges fit; seeing all the Powers of
Nature and of second Causes are nothing but
Instruments in *his* hand, and under *his* direction.
Trust therefore in the Lord, with all thine Heart,
— and in all thy ways acknowledge him; Prov.
iii. 5. He can save, whenever he pleases; 2 Chr.
xiv. 9, 11. and xvi. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. with
many, or with few; causing all the Accidents,
which we call Time and Chance, to fulfil his Word;
Pf. cxlviii. 8. and execute his Pleasure: So that,
if he thinks fit, even five shall be able to chase an
hundred, and an hundred shall put ten thousand to
flight, Levit. xxvi. 8. and Deut. xxxii. 30.

3dly and lastly, FROM this Notion of Provi-
dence, may be given a plain and direct Answer
to that Question of the profane Fatalist; *Job xxi.*
15. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?
and what Profit should we have, if we pray unto
him? Indeed, if the Course of Nature, and those
things which we call *second Causes*, were independ-
ent upon Providence; there *would* be good Rea-
son to ask, what Benefit could there be either in
Prayer or *Thanksgiving*. But if, as has been
shown, Nature is nothing, and second Causes
are nothing, but mere Instruments; then it is
very plain, that Prayer and Thanksgivings are as

SER M. much due to God for whatever is brought about
 XXIV. by *natural* Causes, as if he had done the thing by
 any *other instruments* instead of *these*, even by the
 most miraculous ones; Which, in that Case, be-
 ing no less constant, would have been no more
 miraculous than *these*.

The END of the Fourth VOLUME.

60057

BOOKS Printed for A. MILLAR, and
J. and R. TONSON, in the Strand.

THE Works of Samuel Clarke, D. D. late Rector
of St. James's, Westminster, 4 vols folio.

N. B. *The 3d and 4th vols may be had alone, to complete such Gentlemen's Sets as purchased only the two first vols.*

Sermons by Dr. Samuel Clarke, in 11 small pocket
vols. the 7th edition.

An Exposition of the Church Chatechism, by Dr. Samuel
Clarke, 8vo. the 6th edition.

A Paraphrase on the Four Evangelists, by Dr. Samuel
Clarke, D. D. 2 vols 8vo. the ninth edition.

The Works of the learned Isaac Barrow, D. D. 3 vols
fol. the 5th edition.

The Works of the most reverend Dr. John Tillotson,
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, 3 vols fol.

Another edition of the same in 12 small pocket vols.

Dr. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, in nine
books, 2 vols 8vo. the 4th edition.

— Sermons, preached before the honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, 2 vols 8vo. either volume may
be had separate.

— Julian: or, a Discourse concerning the Earth-
quake and Firey Eruption, which defeated that Emperor's Attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem,
the 2d edition 8vo.

— Alliance between Church and State, the 3d edition 8vo.

— Remarks on Several Occasional Reflections: in
Answer to Dr. Middleton, Dr. Pococke, the Master
of the Charter-house, Dr. Richard Grey, Dr. Stebbing,
Dr. Sykes, and others; serving to explain and
justify divers Passages in the Divine Legation, objected
to, by those learned Writers. In two Parts.

— Critical and Philosophical Commentary on Mr.
Pope's Essay on Man.

Dr. Warburton's 4 Sermons, viz. On Popery—On the
late Rebellion—On the Suppression of the late Rebellion—And on the Fast Day, December 18, 1745

— Apologetical Dedication to the Rev. Dr. Stebbing, in Answer to his Censure and Misrepresentation of the Sermon preached on the General Fast Day, December 18, 1745.

The Works of Alexander Pope, Esq. in 9 vols complete; with the Commentary and Notes of Dr. Warburton, large 8vo.

Another Edition of the same in 9 vols small 8vo.

Another Edition of the same in 10 vols small 12mo.

The Works of John Milton, complete, in 5 vols royal 4to.

Mr. Rapin's History of England, with the Heads and Monuments, in 2 vols fol.

The same in 15 vols. 8vo.

The Works of the most reverend Dr. John Sharp, late Lord Archbishop of York, in 7 vols 8vo.

Another Edition of the same in 7 vols 12mo.

Sermons on Various Subjects, by James Foster, D. D. 4 vols.

— on Various Subjects, by John Abernethy, M. A. 4 vols.

— on Several Subjects, by John Orr, M. A. 4 vols.

— on Several Subjects, by John Balguy, M. A. 2 vols.

Presumptive Arguments for the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Religion; in 11 Sermons, by James Duchal, D. D.

Controversial Discourses; chiefly on the Evidence, and fundamental Doctrines of Christianity, by Philip Skelton, M. A. in 2 vols.

Deism Revealed: or, the Attack on Christianity candidly reviewed in its real Merits, as they stand in the celebrated Writings of Lord Herbert, Lord Shaftesbury, Hobbes, Toland, Tindal, Collins, Mandeville, Dodwell, Woolaston, Morfau, Chubb, and others. In 2 vols. 12mo. the 2d edition corrected. By the same Author.

— On the late Rebellion—On the Suppression of the late Rebellion—And on the Fast Day, December 18, 1745.

